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POEMS FROM CHRISTMAS COMMENTARY

By K. Arnold Price

(Christmas Commentary is a sequence of fourteen songs and dialogues written for the voices of the Virgin Mary, four Angels, the Ox, the Ass, Sparrows, Insects, three Kings, four Workers, the Earth, the Neutral Observer, Those who Rejoiced, Those who Took Thought for the Morrow, and the Men of a Future Age. Of the fourteen poems five are given here.)

I

THE SONG OF MARY

His dark was my brightness,
His being my reason,
His weakness my triumph,
My pain his releasing.

How close is the strangeness,
How near the unknowable,
Only heart can find voice
To sing the untellable.

Peace is among us ;
Asleep in a manger
A man-child lies warm
With beast and with angel.

II

FROM THE COLLOQUY OF THE KINGS

(They are journeying through the night to pay homage to a new-born king.)

THE BEARER OF

FRANKINCENSE : so still so bright ! —as if we
 moved in a bell of glass !
 Or seemed to move perhaps Time is
 standing still

THE BEARER OF

GOLD : Last week it was a wedding
 very tedious
 There was much feasting ; and I am on a
 diet ;
 Journeys and ceremonies ; the burden of
 public life,
 The protocols, the weight of robes and
 regalia

THE BEARER OF

FRANKINCENSE : This is the journey that Everyman must take,
 Not a wandering, but a journey urgent with
 purpose
 Towards a new form, or a new interpretation
 of truth—

THE BEARER OF

MYRRH : Leave newness and the talk of it to the people,
 To whom God has given only the power to
 wonder ;
 For us who know there is only the pre-
 destined pattern—

THE BEARER OF

FRANKINCENSE : But this is the birth of a god !—

THE BEARER OF
GOLD :

—the birth of a king—

THE BEARER OF
MYRRH :

Look at the heavens ; look at the dancing
stars ;
They keep their appointed places—

THE BEARER OF
GOLD :

—and that is our assurance ;
The new can be ill-boding as a comet,
Affrighting the ignorant and giving rise to
unsuitable conjecture ;
It must lie nursed awhile in the arms of the
old,
As seed in the earth, awaiting its due season,
For everything on earth has its hour and its
position ;
And we who journey to greet a new-born
king,
Salute him with the homage of the centuries ;
Thus, majesty establishes majesty,
Clothing a naked prince with ancient panoply,
That even the lowly feel themselves ennobled
In his glory, and adore the incomprehensible.

THE BEARER OF
MYRRH :

Do what we may, he will perish of a dilemma ;
As a god he must amaze without edifying ;
As a man he inherits humanity's disaster.
This king will make the highest sacrifice,
In total awareness meet total immolation.
A beast dies in the clutch of catastrophe,
But man in his tree-top cradle *knows* he will
fall,
Exposes the implicit, and braves the
corollaries ;
He *knows* he is predestined to be defeated,
And in his comprehension finds his victory.

III

THE INVOCATION OF THE DOMESTIC INSECTS

New milk whinging into pail,
 Tell for him your plangent tale.
 Stumbling clog and rumbling hub,
 Beat for him your rub-a-drub.
 Crock and pitcher, mug and platter,
 Rock him with your chink and chatter.
 Puffing bellows, humming kettle,
 Fireside crack of stool and settle,
 Lapping flame and falling ember,
 Lull him through the dull December.
 Whine of saw and thud of mallet,
 Clapper-tongues of tub and skillet,
 Padding hoof and axle-shriek,
 Harness-clatter, felly-creak,
 Give him in your gadding voices
 All the noon-day country noises.

IV

THE SONG OF THE EARTH

(The man-child in the manger is moving in Time towards his first dawn ; and earth speaks to him of daybreak.)

Dayspring is gold fall
 Is dew clot astraddle swung
 Birch light and beech burn
 Plane smirch and pine raddle

Dayspring is ditch stir
 Scut flurry muzzle twitch
 Wing stretch and feather whet
 Whippet silking meadow breath

Dayspring is spindrift
 Is gale tackle feather shed
 Wind sweep of seed shag
 Mast drift and lime hackle

Dayspring is sedge seep
 Pool mottle peacock lit
 Bog bitter flood curd
 Must creep and fungus wattle

V

THE SONG OF THOSE WHO TOOK THOUGHT FOR THE MORROW

(There were some who feared the birth and the tidings of joy.)

Who now shall be scourged ? says the lash to the warder ;
 What now shall be safe ? says the key to the steward ;
 Who now shall have honour ? says star to the garter ;
 Who'll huff and who'll puff ? says pundit to beard.

Where is our meat ? screams the sword to the dagger ;
 Where is our glory ? says spur to the crest ;
 Where is our profit ? shouts huckster to haggler ;
 Where's our bull-roarer ? says prophet to priest.

Shall I lose my balance ? says the clerk to the ledger ;
 Shall we lose our quarry ? says huntsman to field ;
 Shall I lose my reason ? says lock to the warder ;
 Shall we lose our title ? whispers parchment to seal.

Who now will keep tally ? cries the till to the higgler ;
 Who now will pay interest ? cries broker to bill ;
 Who'll coffin the dead ? cries grave to grave-digger ;
 And who shall inherit ? cries lawyer to quill.

THE ENCHANTED LAND

Play in Three Acts

BY

GEORGE FITZMAURICE

CHARACTERS

AENEAS	...	...	...	...	...	King of Ireland.
EITHNE	...	...	...	...	...	His betrothed.
MARSE	...	...	...	...	...	Housekeeper to Mananaan.
DIARMUID	...	...	...	...	...	Her husband.
ELAINE	...	...	...	...	...	Their foster-daughter.
THE THREE ADVISERS						
DONAL THE FOOL						
THE HOUND OF MANANAAN						
VARIOUS KINGS						

ACT I.

Scene—Apartment in the under-sea habitation of Mananaan. At extreme left high staircase down which some light comes. At back near staircase is a high-up small window. Back of stage is obscure. At extreme right is a door apparently leading to a room. At rise of curtain Eithne is discovered seated on block a few paces from door, toying with ball of thread. Enter from left-back Diarmuid and Marse.

DIARMUID: (*half-intoning*). Happy is Eithne the dark-haired! Nearly ended is her sojourn in the Land of Mananaan, for the five years she was placed under enchantment are drawing to a close. There is a shimmer in the calm sea with the sun broadly shining; 'tishn't visible yet the golden prow of the ship from Ireland; but well Eithne knows 'tis coming surely; counting the minutes she is impatient for the advent of her Aeneas, and already in her ears is sounding the 'swish swish' of the proud vessel from Erin.

MARSE: 'Tishn't a bit lonesome she is leaving the Enchanted Land, though 'tis well we treated her, giving her as you might say much of a muchness what we had ourselves. By the orders of the Lord of the Deep surely—in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Boss of the Underworld—still we did it, Diarmuid.

EITHNE: Grateful, indeed I am, Grey Marse of the Whirlpool; but—there is no denying it—it rejoiced I am to be returning to Erin.

MARSE: No blame on you at all, my honest girl and I only talking. 'Twas long enough—five years—God knows! for old King Brian to be putting you under geasa because of your courting his son Aeneas; but can he stop Aeneas now and he dead from keeping his compact with you and fetching you back to his bosom and his palace by the Shannon Shore? Faith, he can't, agragil, and 'tis too happy you should be itself, for 'tishn't alone returning to Erin you are, my dearie, but returning, you a poor person to be a Queen. To tell God's truth it's a surprise to me 'tishn't nearly off your nut you are with joy, at the thought of the almighty

grandeur that's coming to you, what never yet happened in the world to one of your like.

EITHNE: (*wisely*). There might be a reason Marse of the Whirlpool; for, if it's a poor person I am itself 't isn't without my treasure I am in my beauteous ball that's my consolation and makes the time go quick. 'Twas from a brown woman I got it, who came out of a fort, where the 'good people' do be, on a haunted eve of May. 'That's a purty ball,' said she, 'and don't ever throw it away. For if you do,' said she, 'you'll never get the like again.' Look at all the fine colours that are on it. It's a marvel it is.

MARSE: 'Tis purty I'll admit; but if it was fifty times as gorgeous what mass would I have on it for a treasure, or to give it even the name of a treasure itself—it's comparing I am—for in the heel of the hunt what is it or could be but a three-halfpenny ball of thread.

EITHNE: (*gleefully, smiling*). 'Tis there you're out. And if they knew the virtue is in it, it's envying me they would be, the richest in the land, for charm and loveliness it brings to cheek and eye, and delights and wonders to the roamings of the mind.

MARSE: (*drily*). I see; and better still, says you—it's now I'm comprehending—it's by the power of that fancy ball you put the come hether on Aeneas Bawn the King.

EITHNE: 'Twas no sin for I couldn't help it and he coming and loving me the minute he saw me in our valley beyond in Erin of a bright summers day. No king was he then, no less, but a prince, faith, and he disguised itself as a poor scallop picker, in a manner the people were thinking me cracked to be having a truck with him and they alluding to him as a raggedy vagabond. 'Twas different after, and the eyes opened wide by them believe you me, when the gent who knew him let the cat out of the bag about him, but worse for me—yourself is wise of it—and the story coming to the ears of King Brian.

MARSE: I wouldn't doubt the mischief makers and they are under the sea as well as above it; 'tis equal to you in the heel: 'tis a dandy hornpipe you can be dancing for yourself on Brian's corpse, and good luck to you, my doxy.

DIARMUID: (*turning around from little high-up window at back of stage*). A speck on the far distance of the sea and the speck is getting larger. It could be the ship from Erin.

EITHNE: I'll go and do the finishing to my little settling-up before Aeneas comes. And there is a gold brooch and some trumperies I want to make a present of to Elaine. She is late in bed to-day, dozing away for herself maybe, for the difference is too great, and the things of Erin cause no excitement to a girl of the underworld. Still it is beholden I am to your foster daughter, civil she always was, and 'tis the children in Ireland I can be telling after the strange sights she showed me in the labrinths of the domains of Mananaan. I'll go and finish my little settling-up. (*Exit by door at right back*).

MARSE: (*grimly*). She'll go and finish her settling-up—let her. She'll give a gold brooch and trumperies to Elaine—(*sarcastically*)—isn't she marvellous with her generosity and won't Elaine be kicking with surprise and enjoyment at the present: I'm telling you Diarmuid, it's some thought they have of themselves—the upper bunchers, and it's my candid opinion that dame has small mass on us that are here down under. A day she was having converse with Maeve the Big Eel of Poul-na-thoumpil—a bitter divvle that can't get it from her to forgive me

though it's thirty years since you gave her the go-by in my preference—I had my ear to the chink and I did hear the doxy from Erin say 'a vulgar ignorant woman'. I couldn't prove it was myself she was referring to, but if I could you can take your davey it wouldn't be going from my pussy a leathering that would make her think twice the next time before she'd allude insulting to a person of my condition and responsibility, housekeeper here and a trusted servant of Mananaan to boot.

DIARMUID: What pains need she be making now for you, aroo? Isn't she as good as departed.

MARSE: How can a warrant help talking and 't isn't all on account of myself she's making pains for me; for I can't get it out of my napper that this damsel from Erin in one way or another has something to do with whatever has cracked up with Elaine.

DIARMUID: A similar thing was brewing in my mind but I shy of drawing it down to you, for it was a mystery to me how that could come to be. It couldn't be thinking less of herself she'd be by comparing for what patch is the woman from Ireland on our Elaine? A beam of light in the darkest night I call her; the flowery cabbage of the bottom of the deep. 'Tisn't much mass you have on poetry, Marse, but maybe you might think this would be a sweeter description of the appearance of our darling Elaine, the beauteous full moon of the ocean?

MARSE: (*cracking her fingers, after deep reflection: judically*). It could be. But whether or which that's not the point for, for some days past 'tis a changed girl is Elaine. Her appetite gone teetotal.

DIARMUID: Gone teetotal. Yesterday itself, I noticed her special. I didn't mind about the brukkisht for there was sleep in her eyes and the morning being chilly she renayed throwing the cold water in herself. It is to the dinner I'm alluding; the finest salmon was ever caught on the coast of Norway cooked by myself and landed up to her in a dish, in a manner that would draw water from the mouth of bould Mananaan himself. She turned up her nose at it.

MARSE: She turned up her nose at it. But whist! She'll hear us, for here she is and Eithne after her.

ELAINE: (*stamping foot and going determinedly towards left*). She with her mangy present to me, and a great ship coming to her from Ireland and a grand king in it! A memento, says she, nearly choking keeping back a giggle, and she griggering me and gloating over me that's miserable planted in this hole for the dear days of my life.

EITHNE: Is it me to be crowing over you! Surely Elaine, 'tis some little fit, and myself thinking 'twas the way you had forgotten all about me or my hour of liberation. Likewise, it couldn't be in earnest you are letting on to be envying me, you that has your own world, and 'tis some little whim or joke. A long time we spent together, and you couldn't be refusing now to accept the trifle—little as it is, 'tis all of value I have—and we parting for ever, Elaine. (*puts present into Elaine's hands*).

ELAINE: (*throwing brooch, etc., on to floor*). The dickens to it and you! And wishing I am the sight of you I never see. Don't be rising me more, now, with your hypocries and your plomauses. (*Venomously*) Don't be attempting it, I'm saying.

EITHNE: (*re-seating herself on block; in shocked tone*). Indeed I won't I assure you. And, sorry I am, and very: but how could I suspect or credit or

believe that a woman of Mananaan would be so begrudging as to be envying me—a thing that's now but all too plain, Elaine.

ELAINE: Time it was plain to you, and blame yourself for it, to boot. Happy I was and contented in the Land of Mananaan, till you coming and telling me of the game they do be having in Erin with their fine clothes and their frolics, their music, and their dancing; their eating and their drinking, mutton and beef and venison and new milk and mead, fresh butter and honey and eggs and cheese, cakes and dainties, and the divvle knows what till you had me wondering how I ever thought them fine—the boiled periwinkles they have all the mass on here or the preserved shrimps, and from the dint of listening to you even the salmon couldn't entice me in the heel, and I teetotally turned against fish.

EITHNE: Sure, we do be having fish in Erin likewise, but not to the same extent I'll admit. Still, what they use in the Land of Mananaan, must be suitable for them that are in it; and isn't it a sight I would give, Elaine, that you would forget all I was telling you in my foolishness of our carry-out in the little isle above, and be contented in your own world under the sea.

ELAINE: (*going towards right*). It's never contented there I'll be again I'm telling you (*looking out little window at back*). Oh, the marvellous ship is nearly alongside and it must be the wonderful king is surely in it! Misfortune to me that I can't get out of this spot and I wisht I could get out of it and get to Erin. (*Gives queer side-look at Eithne*).

EITHNE: If it was in my power it's happy I'd be to take you with me, Elaine, and 't isn't minding I'd be the few cross words you spoke. But yourself knows Mananaan's order that only one woman shall Aeneas fetch back with him to Erin. There is no possibility of it.

ELAINE: There is no possibility of it, and still there might. The fine ship—the grand ship—there is no possibility of it says you, but still maybe there might. (*Snatches piece of thread*).

EITHNE: My lovely thread, the choicest piece in all my wonderful ball! Elaine, you couldn't be so heartless and to keep it from me and my heart's blood in it; or is it the way you would surely have the gumtion to think it would work some change in you in a manner you would strive to put the come hether even on my Aeneas himself?

ELAINE: (*gaily*). Faith then, that's just what I'm after and wouldn't you have the manners not to be interrupting me in my experiment. Your bit of magic thread is making a right dandy of my own little ball, covering the top thereby concealing deficiencies and in respects the new ball will be better being lighter than your own.

EITHNE: Isn't it shameless you are yourself! You thief of the underworld is there no shame at all on you in your wickedness?

ELAINE: (*gaily*). Wickedness, says she, trying to bustle me; and 'win who will and damn the misser' being the law of life.

EITHNE: (*hotly*). Your law, maybe, you infernal person and that of the land from which you spring; but 't isn't the law of Erin nor is it the law of God; and thanks be there's no fear on me the man above will allow the diabolical thing of a twelve-toed woman of the underworld making Aeneas perjure himself or prove false to me and he one of Erin's true-born kings. What's up with you strange person of the underworld or has the dint of envy and jealousy driven you teetotal mad?

ELAINE: Mad is it! Faith if it was I who had been in Erin I'll warrant I'd have managed to give old King Brian a queer how-dye-do before he'd have got the vacancy to put me five years under geasa; and you can take your davey likewise, 'tis the full value I'd have got out of it, if it had come my way, before I'd have let the peepers see my magic ball. Alluding to envy and jealousy ma'am we'll soon see who's most afflicted that way, and now it's between us beat who is to be the Queen.

EITHNE: To much respect I have for myself to argue further with you, let alone replying in the same strain to your coarse tirade. But wouldn't you speak to her, Marse of the Whirlpool, or advise her, Diarmuid, you. Your foster daughter might be doing me a terrible injury but it will be no benefit to herself, quite the other way about instead, which should make you hearken to my request; for the beauty that is in Erin is no beauty here in the Land of Mananaan, and whatever little sketch of it she might capture by the power of my wonderful thread, will but turn her into an ugly porcupine in the eyes of Phelim of the Lobster Claws, her own intended man.

MARSE: Begob, maybe; but whether or which don't be getting excited, for you needn't be expecting help from this chicken; howbe she might do the suitable for you if you'll go and ax her—your chum the Big Eel I'm alluding to, she of Poul-na-thoumpil, a fine persuader moreover, and 'tishn't vulgar and ignorant she is, like more, not she, tony Maeve.

DIARMUID: Let me say my say; and 'tishn't wishing I'd be to be coming against our darling Elaine even in a whim itself. (*To Elaine*) But what could be more perfect than what you were and Phelim knows what I know; and 'tishn't a month of Sundays since I was making a shift in poetising to picture your qualities to Marse and what I hit on in the heel I still think to be the best description of you, Elaine and my darling, I calling you the beauteous full moon of the ocean.

ELAINE: So it is too flattering, Pop Diarmuid, but that don't signify now and Lobster Claws a back number as far as I am concerned. (*Facetiously*). Suitable he was when I wasn't brassy but now he won't do not being half enough classy. However, our respective positions being now in the way of being reversed and as 'twas herself brought him down, I would say Lobster Claws would match Eithne nicely, and if she is willing, upon my word and honour, I'll hand him over to her with a bouncing heart and a half.

EITHNE: What a sacrilege even to breathe such a thing.

MARSE: Handsome I calls it, Elaine, and I wouldn't be minding her tossing of her top-nut. Up to her tip is Lobster Claws and maybe too good for her now, itself, and she having lost a part of her ball.

ELAINE: Well, the offer is made and she can take it or leave it, says Elaine. (*Twisting thread around ball vigorously*). Meantime I'm getting on finely thank you, and you wouldn't believe, Eithne, what a funny feeling is coming to me through the neck and the cheeks and the ears. 'Tis the marvellous thread, entirely, so it is, and changing I am like magic myself, in a manner you won't know what o'clock is it, ma'am, till you see me with as good right as yourself, hopping on one leg hilabilllooooing 'I'm Irish and proud of it, too'.

EITHNE: (*rising and going towards right*). This is the limit! (*Looking upwards*). Oh, Aeneas, come quickly! Thank God you are coming! Thank God, I hear the hatches being let down. Let me go into the room for my little box; but I do not want Aeneas to enter here but will rush up the steps to meet him and

away with us over the wide sea with the fresh air coming to us, and the blue sky above us, away to Erin. Oh to out of this den of sacrilege and ribaldry, to be free from contact with creatures who would turn the mellow light of heaven into the lurid gleam of hell. (*Goes in by door at right*).

ELAINE: Hoytee-toytee-tiddletee-tee, I scratched my axter and caught a flea. (*Goes rapidly and locks door on Eithne*).

DIARMUID AND MARSE: (*with some dismay*). 'Tisn't the way you are surely locking her in!

ELAINE: (*gaily*). Isn't it what I was after and the allusion to Phelim did it—no fear of Mananaan catching us and he fishing for himself in Greece. Ten minutes start of her might do me. Isn't she the mug! Crickey! I'm thinking that fairy woman in giving her the ball gave her likewise a clout unbeknownst on the top-piece. (*Giggling*). God send there may be more mugs like her in Erin. Glory! the King is on the top-stair. Oh, the grand opportunity that has come to me and 'twill be the dickens if I fail. A little flutter of the nerves is on me—pinch me, Marse, and pinch me, Diarmuid. (*They pinch her on arm*). Another little flutter—no, it's gone, you needn't. 'Tis a little nervous I'm getting, though, no, I amn't—I am—I amn't; I am, I amn't. Whist buck up, Elaine, or go to Spain, hyco! hyco! hyco!

(*Donal comes down steps*).

DONAL: (*laughing loudly*). Excuse me, lady. And don't be in dread of me for it's only Donal the Omadhaun, I am, and the King, the gay soul, alludes to me regular as Donal the Fool. If it's laughing I am I can't help it; for, said the King, said he, to his three Advisers—men of learning they call themselves—'go before me,' said he, 'and see first if all is serene below. Whereat they made a hop but if the Courtiers did I made two, and it's first I am and foremost I am and cheers for Carrigafoyle.

ELAINE: (*recovering from her surprise, sweetly*). Certainly, Donal; cheers for Carrigafoyle.

DONAL: (*laughing loudly as before*). And look at them now, lady, picking their steps, for though the heads by them might be gorgeous, their legs are no good at all.

(*Courtiers appear on stairs*.)

ELAINE: (*aside*). Men of learning they call themselves. (*Aloud*). But oh, Donal, it's terrible clever looking they are entirely. Great scholars surely—all intellect.

THE COURTIERS: (*to each other, delightedly*). A woman of perception—of keen observation. A remarkable woman—in every way, in every way superior to Eithne.

DONAL: Don't be minding them, lady. God forbid it's any reflection Donal the Omadhaun would be putting on your own purty self, but don't all know Eithne is the saint of the world, and the half of Ireland praying for her this minute to return to be their Queen. 'Tis spite is pinching these courtiers—they don't think Eithne good enough for being a poor man's daughter, and though King Aeneas does be said by them in general he wasn't over Eithne and they backing up old King Brian against her; but Aeneas wouldn't budge and Donal said "right" and now Donal takes the shine out of the Courtiers, and Aeneas coming to claim his

true love; likewise as you know, Donal beating the devil out of them in the line of pins, for it's first I am and foremost I am and cheers for Carrigafoyle.

COURTIERS: The fool rambles through the brambles. That's excellent 'through the brambles'.

ELAINE: (*clasping her hands, reverently*). How marvellous are the Courtiers of Erin! They speak as 'twere with one mind. Elevated are their sentiments; Oh, sad is me, who will have no further opportunity of improving myself with their converse.

COURTIERS: (*with admiration*). No need for improvement there. She is absolutely it. And what a delight to discourse with her who is so patently of our sphere. Hence a thought: yes, decidedly let us speak to Aeneas. (*Looking upwards*). Then come, O King! more quickly; you ask if all is here serene, we reply, here are wonders. Yes, here are wonders. Or perhaps, better, here is a wonder, a wonder of female perfection, mind clear, poise of head superb, nose correct, bust ample, figure *distingué*. The altogether, so to speak, an entity created specially to charm the heart of Aeneas Bawn.

KING: (*from above*). Is this impertinence or what? Charm the heart of Aeneas Bawn! the heart that Eithne has already won. Nor do I want to hear but of my darling and is not Eithne there?

DONAL: Nor here nor there nor anywhere; but, King, I'll ask this fine dame where can Eithne be?

ELAINE: She's in her deshabelle, Donal. The dear girl is in her deshabelle, and give her time to settle herself, Donal, and comb her raven hair.

EITHNE: (*from within, while Marse and Diarmuid on a sign from Elaine go and make noise near door to drown Eithne's voice*). 'Tis false and help me, Donal. It's locked in I am, Donal; for God's sake set me free.

DONAL: (*puzzled*). Her voice I surely hear.

ELAINE: Complaining to herself, Donal, and don't pretend to notice or 'tis vexed she'd be entirely; for she'd like it kept a secret the colics and the belchings that do be troubling her so severe.

COURTIERS: (*Tossing heads scornfully*). The colics and the belchings' Servant girl's complaint. Monstrous in a Queen.

KING: (*from above*). What nonsense is going on down there or is a conspiracy amongst you to slander my Eithne, she who could go like a stag from boulder to boulder blowing zephyrs before her. The colics and the belchings! Eithne to be so vulgar! impossible to be believed.

DONAL: And here's one that wouldn't believe it if the dame swore all the books in Ireland on it. (*To Elaine*). And, it's mistaken you must be, my purty, or someone has told you a lie.

KING: (*appearing on stairs*). Impossible to be believed, I repeat it. (*Seeing Elaine*). Oh, but Donal, we mustn't be contradicting a young lady, since 'tis a young lady has said it.

ELAINE: (*to Donal*). What a marvellous man! What a wonderful god-like man! (*Kings pulls out little mirror from pocket, and examines himself, pleased*). The King of the World!

DONAL: Not half bad, ma'am, to have him King of Ireland.

ELAINE: (*with simulated emotion*). Yet, of all the world he surely should be king; only I suppose 'tis the way with him he wouldn't leave Ireland for the world.

KING: (*to courtiers, astounded, delighted*). 'Pon my word—really ah?—a beauteous woman—ah? and witty—ah? In fact—ah—extraordinary.

COURTIERS: The acme of perfection. We have said it. Glad you agree with us and providential the meeting. Hence we decide. Yes we decide emphatically to advise you to contract yourself to her and fetch her home your Queen.

KING: (*coming off stairs on to floor*). But, Eithne?

ELAINE: Elaine.

KING: (*pensively, looking dreamily upwards*). Eithne?

ELAINE: Elaine, The Princess Elaine of the Land of Mananaan.

KING: (*suddenly, to Elaine*). Oh, pardon—it's something I was thinking of and you wanted—isn't it?—to tell me your name. And a sweet name, Elaine. And my courtiers needn't tell me how sweet you are yourself. (*Advancing to Elaine*). Let me tell you, Elaine—I will tell you, you are the sweetest, the loveliest, the delightfulest creature I have ever seen. (*Faint voice behind door, Marse and Diarmuid continue to make noises.*)

ELAINE: (*clasping her hands, looking towards auditorium*). O, King! (*short pause*). Yet, you mustn't kiss me, Pop and Mom wouldn't like it.

KING: (*with a loud laugh, flustered, somewhat abashed yet advancing a little*). 'Pon my word—ah—honestly now, ah—I had no intention—ah—

ELAINE: (*diffidently*). It might be different of course. Ma and Pa mightn't object—if we were, as the gentleman yonder suggested—contracted.

AENEAS: Then hang all scruples! Let us be contracted and let us kiss. (*They kiss*). Elaine, my Queen.

ELAINE: Aeneas, I love you.

DONAL: Oh, crikey! Eithne bandjaxed all in a hop for a kiss! Bandjaxed, and I see what no one sees—bandjaxed by a dame of the Underworld having twelve toes where she should only have twice five which is ten.

ELAINE: (*going to Donal*). Horrible, prying, dirty, dishonourable wretch peeping, under my very petticoats itself. (*Suddenly, to Aeneas, weeping*). Oh, Aeneas, you wouldn't leave—what harm is an extra toe or two—most ladies have twelve toes in the underworld—I have loved you in my dreams—I shall love you until death. (*Aeneas weeps*).

DONAL: Faith, lady, I'm thinking you weren't far wrong taking me for a king when I first landed here according to the appearance was on you; for now it's as plain as fourpence to me, the king he is a fool.

AENEAS: (*sternly*). Desist, one shuck! Is it not enough that my heart should be wrenched. (*Brokenly*). Oh, Elaine then, we must part. Unfortunate are we kings for whom state reasons are inexorable. Oh, love if you but knew what powers of sarcasm my witty subjects possess! What might they not say of a twelve-toed woman in Erin!

DONAL: They mightn't say much; but if she had a pain in one of the toes they might be curious to know the toe's name.

AENEAS: Enough, donkey. Elaine, it is killing me; I can hardly bear it. I—but a moment—my courtiers do not seem much affected or else they seem to have settled something to their satisfaction and, perhaps, after all, things might not be so serious. At all events they will know how to decide and sit beside me, Elaine, whilst I ask them to come forward and promulgate their decision, and let them be coming in rotation according to naming. (*Complacently, smiling, whilst Elaine seats herself beside him*). Advance then, my three learned courtiers. Gloworm,

Cynicas and Bawbee. (*The courtiers, who have been mumbling among themselves 'three weeks', 'four weeks', six weeks', come forward. Glowworm at left, Cynicas in middle and Bawbee at right. Cynicas stands on Glowworm's foot, who jumps.*)

GLOWWORM: Thank you.

CYNICAS: Very much.

BAWBEE: So—so. So—so.

CYNICAS: Very much.

GLOWWORM: Thank you. We decide that on account of—

CYNICAS: Change of climate—

BAWBEE: And other matters—

COURTIERS: (*together*). We decide that in six months, four months, three months—the extra toes will fall off.

AENEAS: (*laughing loudly, triumphantly*). Sold again Donal the fool; Sold again Donal the fool.

DONAL: It is no mass at all then, you have on Eithne in the heel and is it the way you would leave her here in her lonesome in this fearsome land under the sea.

COURTIERS: She can be sent for—an expedition can be sent for her on a Monday a Tuesday a Wednesday and marry her to a farmer in Erin.

AENEAS: Yes, we'll send for her. (*Noise as of thunder and voice overhead*).

What's this and who is it that calls? What means this fearful din?

DONAL: 'Tis your conscience pricking you, King, is making you in dread. The devil a whack on me. Let the newcomer be who he will. I salute him as a friend.

AENEAS: (*trembling, looking upwards*). Who is up there, speaking, I'm asking again. As a king it's my right to know.

VOICE ABOVE: (*deeply, sonorously*). Speaking, speaking? I am the hound of Mananaan and I graze the deep—Aw-hee; oh-hoo; ah-hah! Great Mananaan's orders are the orders that I keep, aw-hee, oh-hoo, ah-hah!

The hatches are laid and the ship will soon go

And he who's not ready will stay down below;

Make haste then, make haste I've a pain in my head,

And it's badly I'm wanting to go to bed—aw-hee, oh-hoo, ah-hah!

DONAL: If that be the case then here's for the top;

'Tisn't Donal the fool will get left in this shop.

And foremost I'll be, and first without toil—

Whilst cheering again for sweet Carrigfoyle.

(*He runs up steps, cheering and jeering at Courtiers who follow him painfully*).

AENEAS: Elaine, Elaine, why tremble still,

That hound thank goodness! meant no ill.

ELAINE: 'Tis so hard to be happy in this world;

He came so sudden, the loud, bawling churl:

To separate us he meant, I surely believed,

I was wrong, so now, I feel greatly relieved.

AENEAS: All danger is past—no more be cast down.

(*kissing her*). Soon we'll be sailing along be the Laune;

And, upon my seconds 'tis joyful we'll be

Getting married for ourselves in gay Tralee.

(*They go up steps*).

DIARMUID: They're away off—'tis finished—all in a day.

MARSE: I'll now boil the kettle and make our tay.

DIARMUID: If she breaks out itself she's properly late.

MARSE: All her breaking won't do—she can go scratch her pate.

EITHNE: (*forcing door and rushing out*).

You are rhyming you monsters but I can rhyme too,

And I cannot believe my Aeneas untrue.

But one glimpse will restore me the love of his heart

And your blandishments vicious from him will depart.

(*calling, looking up steps*). Oh, Aeneas, Aeneas, 'tis your Eithne is calling to you. Isn't it for me you have come who has been five years parted from you and why should you have come if you hadn't been true. 'Tisn't like this you can go in the heel; 'tisn't possible you could be so changed and hardened in a moment. Why aren't you rushing to me? Oh, Aeneas, have you forgotten that day in Glountane? Has your love for me all gone and fled.

AENEAS: (*aloft*). Elaine! Elaine!

EITHNE: He sees me, he hears me and he denies me. (*Falls; Elaine comes down a couple of steps*).

ELAINE: One bare second, Aeneas. It's my charm for my locket I have forgotten and I have a superstition about losing it.

DIARMUID AND MARSE: (*pointing to Eithne*). It's the way she has got a little faint.

ELAINE: What is her fainting to me. And it's no locket. I return here for no less, but she daring for to thwart me in my triumph. The impudence of her she so low and I so high thinking to come against me in the rights and privileges that now belong to me imagining even to take from me the fruits of my well-earned victory where as if she had behaved herself I'd never have said a word against the expedition coming for her. But now its instructions I want to be giving what to do with the wretch and for your reward, I'll give you a golden calf and its to Erin I'll be bringing you and all the good eating and drinking I'll be giving you.

AENEAS: (*above*). Elaine! Elaine!

ELAINE: Coming, Aeneas, coming. So put her on that stretcher; pile stones on her till you'll hear her chest crack, drop her in the deepest pit, and for proof bring back the half of her loodeen to me. Coming, Aeneas, coming! (*exit*).

(*Marse and Diarmuid place Eithne on stretcher, taking hold of each end*).

DIARMUID: (*as they both go towards right with stretcher*). A golden calf will be our prize and we will go to Erin land.

MARSE: It will be grand.

DIARMUID: But danger is near and the spell-word say; Mananaan suspects though he's far away.

DIARMUID, MARSE: Chuck-chick; chook-chack.

MARSE: Partridges for breakfast; sausage for tea; Diarmuid it will be fine.

DIARMUID: Not forgetting the crow-pie, the honey and the wine.

DIARMUID, MARSE: Chuck-chick; chook-chack; every day something new, the very best of broth and brew; chuck, chick, chook, chack; and no fish except on a Friday (*exeunt*).

VOICE ABOVE: Avhee-oh, hoo-chuck-chick-chook-chack and no fish except on a Friday.

Curtain

ACT II.

Apartment in King Aeneas's palace. At right front Elaine is reclining on sofa, apparently sleeping. In middle of floor Hag with large harp. At right back table laid with eatables, waiter standing near. A door at right. Enter Diarmuid and Marse by left doorway, through which landscape is visible. Window at left of door.

MARSE: Eight years to-day she is queen, our Elaine. You'd think, Diarmuid, it's taking a little rest she was, and she going over in her own mind maybe the events and happenings of her long space of glory, and a doze to slip on her. Faith, 'twasn't all fair sailing with her either, at the start, Diarmuid, and perhaps, her ponderings weren't all on the grand doings. There is a little pucker between her brows that used to be there the first years of her greatness the fear ever present with her some friend of Eithne would up and spot the change she made in herself was due to the virtue of that damsel's ball of thread; and there is a strain about her jaws reminds me of the time she got that start from the ghost of old King Brian.

DIARMUID: I recollect well. And I don't forget the old fellow's ghost either, Marse, for it was a right fright it gave myself whatever tie I took to give a peep out our bedroom door in the dead hour of the night to see who but old Brian himself coming along the passage making for her chamber thinking 'twas Eithne he had in it, and he horrid and bristling fresh from the grave.

MARSE: Another woman would have screeched—screeched and kicked—only the after effects showed themselves in Elaine. But 'twas dandy the lip she gave the old King, he bamboozled thinking of the soft Eithne, till in a while's time 'tis more in dread of Elaine, he, than she was of him, and whatever he might have been coming out of the grave 'twas the right fool he was returning to it, a hump on him and he ashamed, a sort of half-jabber half-laugh coming from him, and he scurrying away back for himself to his royal tomb.

DIARMUID: There is a twitching about her mouth now.

MARSE: It could be she was pondering likewise, Diarmuid, on the pain she suffered through those two extra toes of hers; though there is a half-smile on her as well, and I can't but think of the Advisers, flattered to the moon, the heads swelled as big as pots by them sure their judgment had come true when the toes disappeared, never suspecting 'tis a cow-doctor she got to chop them off and went within the black of your nail of dying over it, itself.

DIARMUID: (*feelingly*). Not even death able to stop her and a thing to be done.

MARSE: And nothing too small for her, likewise Diarmuid, to make her power all the more secure; and, look at the way she fondles the Advisers' brats, she that never had any grah for kids and would hardly itself give suck to her own. Likewise all flummery is she to the Advisers' wives and to hundreds besides—a soft word here and a soft word there, she knowing the weakness of the natives, guessing it even before she left the Land of Mananaan, and praise and porter able to make the Twelves Pins of Connemara hop up out of their abutments and go bumping around the county for you, my dear sir, in a decent hieland fling.

DIARMUID: (*smilingly*). She twigged it well.

MARSE: Signs on, she has the fruit of her ingenuity and she having the biggest stroke of any Queen that ever was in Ireland, and no wonder we'd be chuckling

to ourselves every morning would rise over us at her almighty grandeur and glory, moreover and we knowing the silly way it started by diddling another poor ape of a woman over a tuppenny ball of thread.

DIARMUID: We do be chuckling to ourselves.

MARSE: The twitchings and the strainings have left her now, Diarmuid, a smoothness on her, a calmness suitable to her greatness. A stranger would take her for an angel. Sure, what could be on her conscience, for if the big position came to her the first day by a fluke itself, it's now hers by rights and regularity, whereas if that damsel Eithne had become Queen, I'd bet my old boots that before a month of Sundays was out, some other smart lassie would pop up to put the come hether on the softy Aeneas, leaving Eithne minus her caday of a husband, bawling and lamenting in a corner. But—thank God!—the genius was never more wild about Elaine than at the present moment, the eyes watering by him every time he looks at her—pure daft.

DIARMUID: (*with emotion*). Powerful, everything she did. And, wouldn't it be a scruple if she went and spoilt all by doing a queer thing in the heel. What's troubling me, Marse, is these hags. The people won't know from Adam what pinched her to replace the maids of honour with these old crocks—and faith they don't like innovations.

MARSE: (*gaily*). Whist with you, Diarmuid! Elaine, with her popularity and power could pull down the moon without who it might be, darring to say black your eye to her. But if it happened a share turned rusty itself, I'll engage 'twould take some pains to come paddy over her or make her say die—I'll engage 't isn't with a brace of sugarsticks she can be walloped or diddled, and, not minding her smartness in other points, in the line of fighting she a tough warrant, our Elaine.

DIARMUID: She is tough.

MARSE: Besides, if she never had half the stroke, 'twould be a funny go if she couldn't have whom she likes in her own palace. If it comes to that, isn't she entitled to all privileges, to do whatever matches her, in fact, when she takes a tie and she the Queen. Otherwise what mass would there be on the job of Queen at all or even on that of King either; and you might as well take the clothes off them and exhibit them in front of the people as the same in the make-up as themselves. 'Tisn't that a woman of Elaine's almighty sense would be likely to act outlandish through a fit of capers; and believe you me, whatever they might be, she has her own good and proper reasons for hysing in these hags. With the way Aeneas is, it couldn't be jealousy of the Maids would be moving her anyway, and jealousy, I admit, a miserable thing even in a queen.

DIARMUID: Fine you're talking, Marse, and I hope 'tis all like that.

MARSE: (*blithely*). What other way would it be? But the grub is hot and ready and let us be sitting down to it. Be cheerful in yourself if it was only to please me. Myself, I never let a haporth trouble me and I starting to feed, and hags or no hags 'twould do Elaine no good to let the decent food get spoilt. (*They go to table*). And alluding: It could be the reason Elaine has us always eating in this fine apartment to get us used to being tony—you didn't notice but I put on the satin to-day after hearing it: a hint from the Court Chamberlain some honour is coming to us in celebration seemingly of Elaine's eight years queening—herself no doubt to think of it; and if it is what I'm expecting and I your wife, it's a knightess they'll be making of me.

DIARMUID: (*unenthusiastically*). Allelu, again!

MARSE: And, 'tishn't lepping with joy you are! You'll be better after your fill and let us lay to for ourselves.

DIARMUID: 'Tishn't half the mind I have for gobbling then, and 'tishn't the same taste I'll find in the stuff again, I'm thinking, till I'll be sure all is serene once more with herself.

MARSE: (*eating soup and smacking lips*). The soup is good, anyway; 'tis very good.

DIARMUID: (*with dreary approval*). 'Tis very good. (*brokenly*). But the way to say it, Marse, is, 'tis she is good, our darling Elaine, that's always giving us these gooddels fine, and 'tis well she kept her word with us, our pet, and it now eight years since we left the Land of Mananaan. (*Turns about in chair, looks at Elaine with great favour*). My beauteous full moon of the ocean! 'Twouldn't be the right description of her now maybe, and she by the dint of that chicanery having made those changes in the aspects of her countenance; but it's always the same Elaine she'll be to us, Marse, and I wisht I could take into my own bosom any evil that might be brewing for her in the mind, and from harm and danger keep her free.

(MARSE: Why wouldn't you, Diarmuid, and wouldn't I nearly do the same myself, but, the way you're going on you'll upset me in the appetite. (I'll take two of those lamb cutlets for a start, a share of the duck and a taisht of the roast beef, if you please.) What blame if Elaine was down in the mouth herself, or showed any signs of ere a trouble, but game ball in every way you'd take her, and she in the pink. In the line of health, indeed, I never seen her in better trim a trifle fatter which, however, is again and it suitable and convenient to be putting up a share of the mate to keep out the chill that does be in the moisture of Erin. She's fine the crater; she's nate out abye us.

DIARMUID: (*agreeing, yet doubtfully*). She is nate out abye us. (*Short pause*). Still, 'tis a curious thing—let her reasons be what they will—that she, who was always so open with us, should be keeping it a secret her meaning for hysing in these old canisters of hags on the premises to us; and big as is her sway and power and stroke, though you'd be saying she's giving no signs of ere a whack it wouldn't surprise me if the twitchings and the strainings in her dozing had more to do with some misgivings as to what might come of her latest canter than to any ponderings she might have been doing on by-gone happenings, Marse. (*Elaine wakes, rises slowly, goes to table at left, looks out window, pauses and goes out rather rapidly*). Not a word out of her, sharpish looking and severe. Didn't you observe the start was on her near the window and she brooding. That sigh that came from her was as loud as a small cough.

MARSE: (*amusedly*). No sigh, honest man, did I hear, but a healthy, natural little belch. Diarmuid, I had a little suspicion, but now it's convinced I am, there is something weighing on your heart and you only starting this tomfoolery about Elaine to give vent to your mournfulness; for, 'tis more than once lately I have taken stock of the long puss on you and no talks of Elaine or the hags at all in it. (A leg of the turkey, this turn; cut the ham thin; and a piece of the breast and one wing of that chicken, agragil). Diarmuid, it must be the climate of this country is softening you, someway; giving you a fit of them scruples they do be having in Erin, and you surely comparing in your own mind our great happiness and comfort with the condition of the commonality.

DIARMUID: (*contemptuously*). The right foola I am then, a fit of apishness

like that on me, my sixty-five years of age come next Michaelmas and all.

MARSE: (*jocosely*). Reddening you are, Diarmuid; ashamed because I have spotted you. But you needn't be too much ashamed, however. I admit, and I small, 'twas a severe pinch of the conscience I had a couple of times after a spasm of pride and gumtion thinking myself so fine not to be like raggedy things and I looking upon them the same as you would on the dirt. But it's no longer childre we are, Diarmuid—what am I but a year back of you—and if we had the right sense—barring our concern for Elaine, of course—we'd never again let anything in the world bother us but ourselves. Then, don't we give charity in deserving cases and in those that aren't for God's sake. Faithuk avico, Diarmuid—(a piece of the breast of the goose—I prefer the breast—and a fair share of the stuffing. It's no great feeder in mate I am as you know, but as you are pressing me, I will have two small slices of the mutton, then)—faithuk avico, Diarmuid, to put all words into one, it's a great mistake to be thinking about the poor.

DIARMUID: (*grimly*). The biggest; and I may as well let you be ravelling away for yourself; only 'twouldn't be right not to prepare you against a sudden calamity, and be able to bear it, Marse: 'tis divilment is surely sailing around Elaine, the divilment that does be in the forts of Erin, out of spite and revenge on account of Eithne, and Elaine in the pinnacle, sailing around our pet, putting the dazzle in her eyes, and in the wind-up, clever and all as she is, inveigling her into taking a false step, for don't forget—big as is her sway and power and stroke—it's a woman of Mananaan she is all the time by nature and inside the skin, and a false step for a woman of Mananaan meaning a queer old high-over and tumble I'm telling you, and will land her, 'tis likely, topsy-turvey on the back of her pole.

MARSE: (*slyly*). Vexed now, Diarmuid, and trying to frighten me. *Suddenly dubiously*. Though a suspicion is coming to me, my old dickens! that you are all the time for some diabolical purpose wishing to upset me in the appetite, and it could be the fooleen I was to be believing it was a little innocent spasm of the child-capers was on you. We were to eat again at six o'clock but the way you have me, it will put me to it to be able to manage the next feed at seven itself. Meantime, as a finisher for the present, I'll have another taishteen of the roast beef, a jerk off that collared head, and a decent share of the cabbage. (*With a sigh of relief, yet queringly*). Thank goodness, however, 'tisn't a gom I am to credit your fable about such a woeful affliction as divilment pinching our Elaine.

DIARMUID: (*rising, lugubriously*). Why then maybe you'll credit it and even before the day's out itself, and, 'tisn't alluding I am now to any grumpiness on the part of mere underlings but a bigger and more terrible calamity I'm expecting to happen any minute—a sure proof of devilment working—no less, in fact, than a scoobeen over the hags between Elaine and my bould King Aeneas himself.

MARSE: (*rising, with surprise and showing signs of growing anger*). A proof of divilment a little scoobeen between a husband and a wife, a thing that happens of itself to prevent their getting a surfeit of one another, putting them in the right fettle after for another fit of ducksy--darling canoodling! (*Very suspiciously*). So, that's the proof you have been cooking for me, nothing but another proof of Elaine's smartness if it does occur, for 'twould be through her engineering, and it the wonder of the world her keeping the gent on the lovey-go eight long years with never one scrape, slap-to, and make-up. As if you have forgotten our own little tally-hos and how we used to be when they were over—twice the better

friends; even after the big who-shall between us entirely, the time you threatened to plant me into the tub of bilin' gruel because—for to torment you—I slipped seventy-five dead flies into your pint of porter.

DIARMUID: (*in distress*). Oh, Marse, wouldn't the appearance of this hag here move you itself. An omen of evil she is to me, wherever Elaine hauled her out of—the horriblemest of all the hags I'm thinking, keeping the face hid, and it seems she kind of knows it herself that it is an agent she is working towards our darling's doom and the awful, hateful look she's giving me this minute out from under her cloak. (*To waiter*). Shemus—for the Lord's sake!—give a bite and sup to that hag.

MARSE: (*suddenly, furiously*). A leer on you, you villain, and at last it's convinced I am: and you'd be wishing to disturb the digestion by me; and you'd be wishing to put the chicken and the turkey fighting inside in the stomach of me, and you'd be wanting to drive me into my grave.

DIARMUID: (*blubbing*). I can bear up no longer—it's tearing me—my poor Elaine; my poor Elaine!

MARSE: (*advancing towards him threateningly*). To be driving me to my grave ultimately, and glory! in a flash all is plain to me—you to be marrying a woman of Erin, after.

DIARMUID: (*drawing back, frightened*). In the name of the Almighty God, Marse!

MARSE: You skaymer of the world, I have you found out, but (*hitting him*) take that and take that again then (*hits again, Diarmuid falls back on to floor, drawing table-cloth, crockery, etc., on top of him. He rises, the gravy dripping from his face*).

DIARMUID: (*violently, catching a stick*). You treacherous diggle! do you think it's going from you it is? (*Makes a movement as if to strike her but is held back back by Shemus. Elaine enters. Diarmuid and Marse draw back guiltily, Marse wiping his face with cloth*).

ELAINE: Quarrelling you two and the fix I'm in. Psh! don't be excusing yourselves. (*Placing flowers on table and gazing out window*). But, I wisht I could know what they are at, the batch, and they having their confab for themselves this minute below in the hollow, Aeneas, the three Advisers and Donal the Fool. 'Twas for a blind I went sloping about picking these ox-eyed daisies, after spotting my batch through the window at their coadjutering, but it failed me to catch the drift of the buzzing in the hollow, the little breeze not blowing the right way either. 'Tisn't that I'd care a button what their coadjutering might be about, if it isn't the way Aeneas would be getting the hump over the hags, and it could just happen that a noody-nawdy like him would have a mule-fit at the most awkward moment. (*A number of hags come trooping in*). Oh, here come my hags. It does the perties good a snort of the fresh air, and be trotting off to your den now, my beauties. (*Hags march towards right*). This evening I might put you at the crazy dance we have been practising together, but that will depend. (*Hags go into inner room by door at right*).

DIARMUID: (*giving Marse a deep mysterious nod, in stricken tones*). The crazy dance.

ELAINE: I have to show some reason, old chum, for the presence of my collection of antiques; and I think I have persuaded a good many that the old blues are marvels at playing and dancing and so forth, though, with the

exception of this joney here (*pointing at hag*), they know nothing except from what instructions I am giving them myself. I don't know whether it is quite wise yet, though, to put them at what is supposed to be their master-speciality—the wonderful jingo yclept, the crazy dance, a concoction, I needn't tell you, purely of my own invention.

DIARMUID: (*drily*). It might be wiser then—the hags but a day here, and it perhaps too good—to hold it over for a bit. Besides, 'twouldn't do to fork out all the spicy and chief novelties at the start, if the bevy of canisters is to be a permanent ornament in the palace by you, Elaine.

ELAINE: A fortnight of the old blues will suit my book, but I'll want them that length till the druid I have chartered, and who, for a consideration, has agreed to do the job for me, has fixed up with Lobster Claws for a bunch of Mananaan girls to act as my Maids of Honour in exchange for a number of Irish girls that the druid for another consideration is putting under geasa for me to despatch to Phelim, my old flame—and amongst which, you bet, I'm taking good care to include my ex-maid of honour, the lassie Peg, who, you know, wouldn't half mind to be Queen of Erin in my place. It will take a fortnight, but in any event to plant the Mananaan girls here right on top of sacking the Erin lot would cause even more ructions and oppositions than the hags, along with the danger of letting the cat out of the bag as regards my game; but, after a sickner of the blue bags you can expect some rush and welcome before a fresh young clutch of giddy gay-poles. But the trouble is to be able to keep the hags for two weeks.

MARSE: (*smiling*). Faith, you will easy, Elaine, and for fifty-two weeks if you thought of it, and if they were fifty-two devils itself. (*Dubious*). But it isn't rightly cottoning on I am yet to what you're after.

ELAINE: (*testily*). What would I be after but the one thing and the big miscalculation I'm after making with respect to Eithne's magic ball. No wonder I'd be a bit peevish in myself and to think that a woman of my brain should make the mistake of not taking timely stock of what was being used up of the thread and sacking a maid occasionally, replacing her by a Mananaan girl, engineering quietly and gradually, no one suspecting a haporth, what'll now have to be done in a slap—not known the difficulties—and all on the hop of the venture of being able to retain the hags for two weeks. To be keeping it from you no longer: what's left of the precious thread is barely sufficient to last me a month, when some fine morning I'll wake up and find myself and I looking in the glass, in the manner of speaking 'as you were'.

MARSE: Oh, glory be! then what's the good of anything, Elaine, and the case as bad as that.

DIARMUID: 'Tis me is now having hope, Marse, and I think I'm beginning to see daylight. I do see daylight, and Elaine's notion surely to have the Mananaan girls about her when she'll revert so that because of the similarity between herself and them the change-back coming on her would hardly be noticed, if it isn't a new burst of admiration she'll draw to herself, and she, of course, the belle of belles of the Underworld.

MARSE: (*enthusiastically*). The best thought, yet, and good girl, Elaine, begob. Didn't I tell it to you, Diarmuid, my confidence in her and my faith, and you meandering mournful about divilment.

DIARMUID: If you did, I was right about a bad thing preying on her—'twasn't knowledge I had to guess 'twas the loss of a share of thread was at the root of it.

MARSE: Well, we were both right so 'tis alright.

DIARMUID: Faith, 'tishn't alright, and the puzzle on her still what the opposition might be to her keeping the hags. (*Looking out window*). The batch are still at their confabbing below in the hollow. Donal the Fool makes no pains for me, but, through means of the lassie getting the sack, it might be a bit ticklish, this trip, to come at the blind side of these colliflagical characters of three Advisers, cousins to each other, but the chief point—all related to Peg.

MARSES: (*gleefully*). Soon she'll be packed off to Phelim—another great thought itself killing two birds with one stone; putting her out of the way of doing harm when the Mananaan squad come along, and chastising the scut for her gumption of thinking herself a match for the Queen, though what a hope she had of disturbing a curl in Elaine!

ELAINE: (*looking out window*). 'Tis mysterious the long time they're at it. True for Diarmuid, the sacking of the lassie is a sore point with the Advisers. Still they, knowing what the king wishes, generally say in the finish what the king wants them to say, though he doesn't always know exactly what he wants himself. I wonder, though, could they be trying to work him into his mule-fit this time. Psh! if be, great changes can be made when your head is on the same bolster with that of your man.

MARSE: (*beaming*). More especially, Elaine, when it's your head and the other, a different kind of head.

ELAINE: That Donal doesn't much signify, surely, though if himself and the Advisers started to agree—a thing I never seen to happen yet, he might have his little effect in working Aeneas into the mule-fit. Only one of his own likes could comprehend him, I'm thinking; still it gripes me to admit a defeat, no matter what I give under doing, but it has failed me to see the inside of that fool. I give him bullseyes galore, and yet somehow, I can't prevent the oneshuck slipping from me.

DIARMUID: (*looking out window*). It's great entirely, their coadjutering.

ELAINE: (*going near door*). There is a rumble now, they are talking louder. They have moved up from the hollow, I see; Donal is wheeling about, rejoiced, but Aeneas has all the appearance of screwing himself up to a disagreeable thing, the Advisers pointing and poking and hitting hands so as to give him courage, I'd say; though isn't it bold in themselves the three curiosities seem, if the whole batch is really thinking of coming and questioning her wishes and facing rebellious, Queen Elaine. I might be able to hear what they are saying from the doorway. (*Leans out door*).

DIARMUID: (*as Elaine turns around*). Elaine, it is rebellious they are then and you looking so fixed?

ELAINE: It's fifty times worse; it's a show; going to bang my hags in me within the hour itself.

MARSE: No time for a bolster-bamboozling—och-o-in!

ELAINE: And it the only chance left to me to save my bacon though they don't know that. The cheek of them, the gumption of them! But a nice how-dee-do, it will be surely if I come a cropper after my eight grand years full boss and queen. But, there must be some plan to put a stop to them; 'twould be the way surely something was wrong with the world if I was to be landed over a mere accident—not divilment itself; even if it was, 'tishn't divilment but destiny will ever conquer Elaine. (*Intensely*). But this isn't and shall not be by destiny, and I

must find some way to circumvent them—they are moving nearer and more quickly. In the name of God what can I think of? I'll chance it and act the innocent and the crazy dance might come in handy along with it. Lord! they are moving very determined. 'Tis hard I'm put to it—well, 'tis the only thing I can think of, to act the innocent.

DIARMUID: God knows, Elaine, it's greatly in dread I am that gag won't work. Rushed you are, or otherwise, out of the cleverness of your brain you'd surely have struck on some better and less risky shift. Acting the innocent might suit a crater like Eithne, but faith, 'tis an almighty risky deviation for you, my pet.

MARSE: I come against Diarmuid. To act the mug takes the smartest; whilst the innocent themselves make mugs of themselves like poor Owen Dowd not having the savvy to express himself suitable to the Doctor sent fighting against Ulster in a galloping consumption, 'tisn't like the prime boy, Murt Halloran, who works in our back garden and has his pension for himself, and 'tis as much as is wrong with him is a pain in his big toe; but he was able to put a face on it and all the doctors prodding and pinching him and thumming him, and things in their ears, the boss entirely, a huge fellow, a belt on him, his hands in his trousers pockets, bellowing, letting every roar at Murt thinking to frighten him; but the big fellow knowing nothing; and Murt with flying colours worked his ticket for himself. I come against Diarmuid and back Elaine to come out the topper.

DIARMUID: No time for arguing now, whatever, Elaine fixed, and here they are tumbling in to us. We must wait and see.

(Enter Aeneas, Courtiers and Donal).

AENEAS: The first of it will be the worst of it. But wouldn't you say something yourself, Elaine? You're a whopper at guessing you know—ah—you recollect you guessed there would be one glugger in the clutch of eggs you got from Mrs. Dempsey. You do recollect it, Elaine—ah you do—ah—and you know—ah—your one desire is to anticipate my wishes (*mops perspiration from forehead*). And now, dear, with respect to these hags—why this particular hag doesn't even show her face—

HAG: I can't show my face, I can't show my face, because I'm far in a way too ugly!

AENEAS: (*laughing*). Very appropriate—ah—'pon my word—ah—and now, Elaine, suppose we consider the matter as settled; you'll do what is right for what I want done is right. (*To Courtiers*). You think it is right isn't it?—of course it is.

COURTIERS: We affirm. We confirm. We concur.

AENEAS: That's alright then—it's alright, Elaine—no necessity to pursue the matter further—only I forget to tell you we are to have distinguished company to-morrow. At ten o'clock in the morning they are coming—any god's quantity of kings in fact—kings from the most diverse regions—coming to see your specially Elaine—the fame of your marvellous beauty having permeated all lands, and these kings are burning with curiosity to see for themselves the original of so many enthusiastic reports. In effect it will be the most glorious day in your life, Elaine, and incidentally also, on your account, I need not add, it will be the same in mine. (*Adroitly*). I am trying to picture you, Elaine, surrounded by your Maids of Honour—suitable foils to your loveliness—whereas on the other hand, no, Elaine, I will not revert again to the subject of those wretched hags; only do say one word before we go, Elaine—I know it doesn't—

but still I'd like to hear it from yourself—that your acquiescence in our most reasonable wishes—doesn't cause you the least displeasure. One word, Elaine—ah—to make sure—ah—there's no ill-feeling like?

ELAINE: Tooden-an-an; tooden-an-de-bob; tooden-an-an, Jack is black as the hob. (*Jerks toy on lap*).

AENEAS: (*with distress and alarm, to Courtiers*). This doesn't make things easier; and we never anticipated it—ah—it's quite unexpected—ah?

ELAINE: Tooden-an-an etc.

COURTIERS: Vulgarish, if childish. We soften. No, we don't soften. Certainly, we don't soften.

DONAL: (*derisively*). A wonder indeed! after all your bold talk—
That the hags were to march at a double quick walk;
But wherefore this beating all round be the bush
Give Donal the word and he'll do the rush.

AENEAS: No impertinence, Oneshuck! The Courtiers have said there is no softening. Therefore, no impertinence!

COURTIERS: Quite so; no impertinence. Instead of softening, we are hardening even becoming harder, essentially. For, Peg is the question—yes—the crux. absolutely, we are hardening—but no impertinence.

ELAINE: (*rising, tearfully*). It was only my whim. I did get such a notion about those hags. Such a harpist this one, such dancers the others—tooden-an-an, tooden-an-de-bob. Still, if you wish them to go, O Aeneas! well, of course, it must be. (*Weeps*).

AENEAS: (*in distress*). But—Elaine, don't cry. Don't Elaine—ah—fie! fie!

CYNICAS: She shouldn't—it makes me feel a ruffian or a guy.

BAWBEE: She oughtn't—for it turns me all pie.

GLOWORM: Same here, and I sigh. But—

COURTIERS: Justice must be done: let's try.

DONAL: She is only acting with the corner of her eye;
And, glad I am she's failed to cook you in her fry;
But she can't cod Donal for Donal is too fly.

ELAINE: You will take my hags then even if I die;
But before they go let me call to them just once—hie! hie!
To pirouette on the floor and then say good-bye.

Hie-hie! Hie-hie!

(*She rings little hand-bell. Hags slide in. Harpist plays waltz. Hags dance around. Elaine dances, waving fan and directing hags, who indulge in all sorts of contortions. Every time Elaine passes Aeneas, she playfully waves fan in his face. Marse and Diarmuid dance in corner. Dance concludes, hags going into inner chamber, Elaine ringing bell to music*).

ELAINE: Toodenan-an etc.

AENEAS: (*looking wildly about him*). Will somebody say something—or, will somebody suggest something—or some modification or—ah—oh, hang it all—ah—(*to Courtiers*) you understand—ah?

COURTIERS: We understand. We consider. We further consider.

DONAL: (*with a loud guffaw*). Considering further all after a prance—Of seven old hags in a hop and a dance!

AENEAS: (*angrily*). I don't mean anything exactly, fool—ah—(*to Courtiers*) but—er—you know if you can—ah—and however, you will finally decide—ah—

(*Complacently, lying back in chair, smiling*). Advance then for the decision, my three learned courtiers, and advance in rotation according to naming: Cynicas, Bawbee, and Gloworm.

CYNICAS: (*coming quickly*). I go first.

BAWBEE: I follow.

GLOWORM: I go after.

CYNICAS: (*when Courtiers have stopped beside King*). Tut-tut!

BAWBEE: Tat-tat!

GLOWORM: Tit-tit! (*short pause*) Tit-tit!

BAWBEE: Tat-tat!

CYNICAS: Tut-tut! Imperatively—

COURTIERS: The hags—

GLOWORM: Must go.

DONAL: Hear! Hear!

CYNICAS: To-day?

BAWBEE: To-morrow?

GLOWORM: In a week?

DONAL: (*crossly*). In a week?

CYNICAS: We decide.

BAWBEE: They must go.

GLOWORM: In—

COURTIERS: One month.

(*Donal in rage starts kicking his hat about*).

AENEAS: (*laughing loudly*). Sold again, Donal the fool; Sold again, Donal the fool!

ELAINE: (*throwing herself into King's arms*). O Aeneas, my dearest! (*They kiss*).

AENEAS: Honestly, Elaine, I should have preferred the Maids before the Kings—some stuck-up customers among them you know—ah—they might jeer—ah—but after all, perhaps, ah—your perfections, my darling, will stand out all the brighter absolutely flabbergasting their Majesties with such a bizarre setting as a bevy of centrifugal blue bottles. (*Gives a loud guffaw*). Don't mind my little joke, Elaine, now don't. (*Rising*). I am ravished really that you are so satisfied at our learned men's judgment. (*Laughs uproariously at Donal as himself, the latter and the Courtiers are going out*). But, sold again Donal the fool, sold again Donal the fool. (*exeunt*).

ELAINE: (*jubilantly, hopping about*). Once more has Elaine won the day, and to-morrow the Kings will all say, what beauty! they'll all shout together. 'Twas grand, 'twas spiffin, 'twas clever! (*reflectively*). Only one thing wanting now to ensure complete and certain victory; if I could devise some means to prevent Aeneas looking on a girl of Erin till I had changed back into my Mananaan condition, having him bamboozled continually with the propinquity of the Mananaan girls after his sickner of the hags.

MARSE: (*gleefully*). Leave that part of the job to me. I have a prescription to rightly box him up and no harm to the constitution. I tried it on Diarmuid here the time he used be roaming in the direction of Poul-na-toumpil, and paralysed him for a month planted in his chair as helpless as a dead pig, and the devil another tickle he had with Maeve till he was nabbed and I had him.

DIARMUID: (*softly, putting his face near Marse's*). Glory, Marse, and 'twas as fond of me you were as all that?

MARSE: (*somewhat shyly*). 'Twas then, Diarmuid.

DIARMUID: A kiss, Marse?

MARSE: Willing, Diarmuid. (*They kiss, Marse suddenly draws back, giving him a thump in the chest, driving him to wall*). On the sore wart he's after doing it again, and I after warning him fifty times, the awkward dickens! and on purpose he did it.

DIARMUID: God knows, Marse, 'twas out of pure accident, my mind half on another thing, and I seeing Elaine giving a new start after examining the magic ball.

ELAINE: (*grimly*). A heart-start, Diarmuid, and I coming on a knot, in fact, I have made another mistake and I'm finished as regards this ball in a round of the clock itself and will be again your full moon of the ocean before the advent of the kings. (*Bitterly*). Oh, what a shock, what a miserable end to me after all! My own fault, my own error, I should not have got Eithne killed—she would surely have gone on manufacturing another ball and I surely could have managed and she in the Land of Mananaan to have eased her of it again. (*Terribly*). Why did I tell you to kill her, and why did you kill her itself, not taking account of my rage and my despire?

MARSE: (*triumphantly*). We did take account of it, Elaine; we sold the doxy for a fiver to Maeve of Poul-na-thoumpil, and 'tis sewing for that beldames she is still, if it didn't happen Lobster Claws got a skeet of an eye on her and cotched her up out of the cave.

ELAINE: Then, it's saved I am, but, Diarmuid, it's going you must be quick, and 'tis to the Land of Mananaan you must be going and grab the ball from her, all of it or a part of it, what you can get of it, and skelp back again as if the old boy was after you. Quick with you, I'm saying, in God's name, and myself and Marse will the spell-words say to open for you a lightsome starry arch under the night-black sea, put a film in the eyes of Mananaan and cause false siren-calls to arise which will divert the attention of the watching Lobster Claws. What hesitating is there on you?

DIARMUID: (*shrugging shoulders, ruefully*). Isn't it going I am, Elaine, but 'tishn't the risk is frightening me, though it's a cold night surely to be meandering in one's lonesome under the fearsome ocean; only, I'm thinking it's the very unsuitable book! I am entirely for a job like this. Wouldn't the druid be the proper person for you, my Queen?

ELAINE: No time for druids now. Off with you on the hop.

DIARMUID: (*going out, but showing no signs of alacrity*). It's going I am, Elaine; it's going I am. (*Goes out*).

MARSE: (*suddenly waking up to the realities of the situation, clapping hands, screaming*). 'Tis going he is, 'tis gone he is and left me minus. (*In aggrieved tones to Elaine*). 'Tis a selfish woman you are in the heel and to be sending a warrant's husband away. 'Tishn't me ever pinched thread from no one or ever wanted to kill no one, and you doing the wrong in me with no heart in you. He'll be in Poul-na-thoumpil and the Big Eel will put the comether on him again, and through the long winter I'll be in my lonesome and they'll be canoodling. Oh, wirra, wirra, the Big Eel having him again! My fine man, my dacent man, my respectable man! (*Starts bawling like child, putting apron to corner of eye*).

Ove! Ove! Boo-oo-oo!

ELAINE: (*catching her roughly by shoulder and dragging her towards front of stage*). Enough of it, you fool, and let us say the spellwords. Chuck-chick. (*Pause*). Is it dumb you're struck or is the tongue paralysed by you again? (*Getting jar and handing it to Marse*). Here's usquebagh woman and now let us the spell words say. (*Marse takes draft out of jar*).

ELAINE: Chuck-chick—

MARSE: Chook-chack—

ELAINE: Chuck-chick—

MARSE: Chook-chick—

ELAINE AND MARSE: Chuck-chick-chook-chack: chuck-chick-chook-chack.

ELAINE: The job is done. Whist what is that queer scraping or is it some new device of the devil to torment me after all I've put over me the days in it. What are you at then, you, or what are you or who might you be?

VOICE OUTSIDE: I am the Hound of Mananaan, and I skim the lea-Awhee-oh-hoo, ah-hah! I'm searching for a certain dame who's left our land of glee—

ELAINE: (*aside*). It's me!

VOICE OUTSIDE: Without the high permission of the great Lord of the Sea,
I'm told she's here—so let me in then quickly I want to fetch
her back—

And wig her ear and pull her nose and give her a handsome
whack.

ELAINE: I guess, sir, you're deceived, by some obsession trepanned,
For this house is the house of the Queen of Erin land
No woman of Mananaan here, therefore your strides retrace
Unless this hag is her you seek—she shakes, let her show her face.

VOICE OUTSIDE: No haggish damsel do I seek, I must have been misled,
To tell the truth I've another pain in my poor woeful head;
I apologise for troubling and I'll get back to my bed,
Awhee-oh-hoo-ah-hah!

ELAINE: I'll go rest myself I'm that tired and flat;
Such strenuous times would kill a nine-life cat;
Buck up old being, he'll return to the hour,
His blood is now too cold for the big dames bower.
We'll chorus our Joy when he comes along,
For what good is a play without a song.
But to--morrow will be the day: (*gaily hopping*)
And I'll be Queen of the May dear, I'll be Queen of the May.

(*Goes into another room, unperceived by Marse*).

MARSE: (*half-smiling, swaying jug*). Elaine will be Queen af the May.
(*Brokenly*). But don't be blaming me, Elaine, if I can't help lamenting him
again—it wouldn't be comely if I didn't—my fine man, my decent man, my
respectable man—Ove! Ove! Ove! Boo! (*seeing Elaine has gone, raises jug to
lips and drinks*).

HAG: (*suddenly playing something on harp*). Huh! huh!

(*Marse retreats precipitately from apartment holding jug, and giving back looks
of terror at Hag who is still playing*).

ACT III.

Another apartment in King Aeneas's palace.

HAG: (*singing*). When once I chanced to go roaming—
It being in the sweet month of May,
When Phoebus approaching most charming,
His beauteous and dazzling rays.
I spied with a charming young fair one
Whose aspects did me ensnare,
And she making her way to Dungarvan,
It being of a market day.

(*Enter Marse and Elaine*).

MARSE: A naughty song and overright the Queen herself! I'm saying again, is there no shame in hags!

ELAINE: Let her be; since Diarmuid has renayged to turn up what signify the ceremonies; important in the gay time, in the tragic, 'tis equal which.

MARSE: Still, why should the old scare-crow be bumping out with the like of that.

HAG: I didn't see any ha-a-rum in it. And didn't herself speak of a song.

MARSE: Well, you know, 'tis in no singing humour she is, but a divvle in you as Diarmuid hinted, and gloating over us you are in your villainy, the Queen in the last link and myself bamboozled with my man gone skow-ways.

ELAINE: (*despairingly*). Will he ever come, before the Kings! Whist! is that a step?

MARSE: (*going to door*). It is. Begob it's him. Thank God it's him.

ELAINE: Yet, you're speaking dully. Is there a gay go about him and does he come, marching?

MARSE: No, but it's zig-zagging he is, a sheepish cut about him, crawling along, the knees bending under him.

ELAINE: 'Tis so he has failed. Or, more likely, 'tis the way he has shirked it. 'Twas too much to expect I suppose, a man of his class and age to go under the sea in the night, and indeed, being a woman of the world, I know 'tis little the best can expect from others in the doubtful and critical hours, though that will be but the small consolation to me surely, Grey Marse, of the Whirlpool, when the hillabillloo is over.

(*Enter Diarmuid*).

DIARMUID: Elaine, you know by me how the case is. But 'twasn't my fault if I didn't reach the Land of Mananaan. I did wait a bit surely by the shore, but never would I have let the sea close in again on the gleaming archway without going, and I was made up to do it, but for a woman coming and passing me by on the shore, a blue cloak in her arm and she raggedy enough otherwise. 'Twas Eithne I see or the ghost of Eithne, and the tongue clove by me, and if you paid me I couldn't stir out of that spot and for six hours I couldn't stir out of it till the tide came and I had to move, faith. Don't blame me, Elaine, for in any case 'twas no good going under the brine and she—whatever the devil has happened to her down below and let her be alive or dead it's on the top-side of the ocean she is now anyway.

ELAINE: (*drily*). How well you recognised her! Even, if you didn't, Diarmuid, I'm in dread you'd have scarcely have ventured on your submarine quest. However, 'tis all the same now.

MARSE: Don't be crawtha with him, Elaine. 'Twas Eithne surely, wherever she might be stuck; and it must have been after her not after you that hound came scraping and aw-hooing.

DIARMUID: 'Tis terrible, Elaine, to see you like this, down in the mouth entirely. Couldn't we make some effort; and couldn't you be hoping yet even against hope? This Eithne, if it's her live self was init, has become oldish and yellow; and what is Peg though the flower of the Maids and with all her red cheeks, but the model of a dairymaid. 'Twas never altogether like Eithne you became anyway for there was always something about you that could only be of Elaine.

MARSE: Faith, I could never see all that great difference between what Elaine was and what she changed herself into, though, of course, there must have been some improvement in it. Maybe 'twas too ignorant I was to notice, but 'twas the same kind of hair was on her from start to finish whatever.

DIARMUID: Nevertheless, it's again she is a bar of flame in the darkest night, Marse, and re-become, of course, the beauteous full moon of the ocean. As I was saying, 'tis no great beauties are about, and with the help of God, Elaine, the novelty of your aspects might strike and move the kings and that will be enough to diddle the wits by Aeneas and the Courtiers.

MARSE: It might strike and move the Kings, but if it don't move them to a proper admiration for our Queen, that is her due, let us be having the pleasure of wishing to ourselves anyway, that it might strike the mouldy lot of them dead.

ELAINE: (*looking at herself in glass*). The coiffure is alright. Could there be yet a chance of victory! I'll go and don my best robe anyway for, let the end be what it will, badly it would become Elaine in the heel to become so cowardly as to renaigy to act the Queen.

(*Goes into inner apartment*).

DIARMUID: The old jizz isn't in her voice, though. But, a doubt of the beauty would break the melt in the smartest of women.

MARSE: Still, she's hoping some bit.

DIARMUID: She's hoping some bit. (*Elaine returns*). Perfection itself, my beauteous full moon of the ocean. 'Tis blind they are if they can't see your wonders, and, if you had started on your own the first day, as I advised, and not minded about the other damsel, it's my candid opinion you'd have beaten her hands down and seduced Aeneas from her in spite of her very teeth.

MARSE: The same I always thought myself.

ELAINE: I wisht 'twas true for you, my dear old friends I wisht 'twas true.

DIARMUID: Here they are—the batch is tumbling in to us—and yonder the strange kings are dismounting on the lawn. Grey horses prancing, piebald and black and bay; It's a fine world it is, for the big people. Let us say to Elaine, Marse, the phrase she said to herself the first time but didn't utter the last go.

MARSE: We will.

DIARMUID, MARSE: Buck up, Elaine or go to Spain—hy-co, hy-co, hyco. Will we pinch you, Elaine?

ELAINE: (*drily*). No need, no necessity, let 'em all come.

(Enter Aeneas and Courtiers).

AENEAS: They are advancing, our visitor kings,
The sun is in the heavens the gay linnet sings—
The green grass blowing is shimmering and shining—
The frogs have postponed their hour for dining—
The tall trees to the bushes are bowing—
Mrs. Daly's cats have ceased their mee-owing—
What could you expect?—a fine day without rain,
And everyone's thought, one thought—'tis sweet Elaine.

(goes, stoops, and kisses Elaine).

A bit palish, my dear. I mean—ah—Elaine, what I see of your cheek is and I can't see very much of it. *(Jocularly).* On the same game as the hags, ah? another little whim—ah? *(To Courtiers).* Some delightful mystery or other? Eh—ah—eh?

COURTIERS: Mystery. Mystifying. No!—preparing—preparing for the dramatic moment, obviously.

AENEAS: Oh, that's it, is it—ah? *(Enter Donal ringing hand-bell).* But, here comes Donal, and jolly ah! Elaine—ah—the fool is jolly—ah.

DONAL: Let me speak my speak-tshew—I sneeze—
But the Kings are here, and they all in threes;
Do you be calling them by their names:
For Donal doesn't know Jack from James;
Besides my job is to ring the bell,
And 'tis Donal can do the same right well. *(Rings vigorously).*

CYNICAS: *(from doorway).* I'll do the first calling:

The King of Ulster
The King of Leinster
The King of the Isles.

(Three Kings enter).

GLOWORM: I'll do the second introducing:

The King of Alba
The King of Greece
The King of France.

(Three Kings enter).

BAWBEE: I'll do the final heralding:

The King of Norway
The King of England

and last but not least and genuflect, all! THE KING OF THE WORLD.

(Three Kings enter).

KING OF THE WORLD: So this is beauty's home, though 't isn't Killarney. *(Nodding head humorously at Aeneas).* A lucky beggar—eh—mooning with a female divinity. Don't get stomached, Aeneas, I'm a jolly sort of chap, you know, and say all sorts of things. By the way, old cock, ere a chance of a drink? I'm as droughty as blazes. And where is your better half—the peerless—the whatch-you-call-her—the—

DIARMUID: (*feelingly*). The beauteous full moon of the ocean.

K. OF W.: Sirrah?

DONAL: (*to Diarmuid*). Curl up, you. Only Donal has the privilege to up and speak to a king. Curl up you hedgehog.

K. OF W.: I'faith, an excellent clown, this.

AENEAS: (*advancing towards K. of W.*). The menial, Diarmuid, has merely forgotten himself, your Cosmic Majesty. (*Going to side-board*). Meanwhile, let us have a drink, and Elaine do deign to turn till I introduce you. You know—ah—my love—it isn't—er—the thing—ah—to keep your back to the King of the World—eh—now—what—ah?

K. OF W.: Egad, if she doesn't turn quickly, we'll soon turn her. (*To kings*). What say, you lot? That's with her hubby's permission, of course.

KINGS: (*bowing knees to K. of W.*). Hear! Hear!

K. OF W.: To tell God's truth, Aeneas, I'm in a devilish hurry; I'm booked for a game of chess with the King of Africa at four o'clock this afternoon—decent old skin, Africa—don't know him? (*Putting down glass*). I have tasted worse whisky. (*Aeneas refills glass*). Thank you. Don't fill it up too much now; no, no soda, it makes me bilious. These other jossers here have also something special on the tapis, each and every one of them, for instance, the King of England is contemplating invading the domains of his brother here of Scotland on Tuesday next, whilst the King of Scotland himself can't sleep with the fright of losing his lawsuit against the Earl of the Orkneys. A mean fellow, the Earl, Scotland, you see, lent him a halfpenny ten years ago, or thereabouts, and the other bloke is now pleading the Statute of Limitations.

K. OF S.: Ah wull have the better of him on points. And ah wull have interest of him. Ah'll not settle for less than tuppence farthing, and do your ken, your Cosmic Majesty, tuppence farthing is tuppence farthing.

K. OF W.: I know—but let it slide. Bad form to be talking shop in the presence of a lady if she does keep the back turned on us, itself. But, our present business is with her nevertheless, and let us drink this bumper to Elaine. Come now then, all you lot, here's to Queen Elaine.

KINGS: Here's to Queen Elaine.

K. OF W.: O Elaine, most perfect of your race,
For God's sake, let us see your lovely face.

AENEAS: Elaine—er—what—ah—now—ah—Elaine—do—ah.

ALL THE KINGS: (*as Elaine starts slowly to rise*). Gloria in Excelsis!
(*She turns stiffly, but with great appearance of dignity, and bows. Kings start and look at her with amazed curiosity, pulling their beards as if not quite sure of the reality of the scene*).

K. OF W.: (*who is the first to recover himself, going towards Aeneas who has retired to his original position*). A damn dirty trick I call it, Aeneas.

AENEAS: But—er—eh—now—ah—

K. OF W.: (*vigorously, impatient*). None of your wow-wow-ah and your wow-ah. It is a dirty trick whether 'tis at your caricature of a woman or at us you wish to have fun at. Although I may be of the debonnair sort there are limits which must not be transgressed, and etiquette is etiquette and don't you forget it, Aeneas. I'm as near getting into a beastly temper as ever I was in my life, sonny; and what a laugh he will have, for I have lost ten pounds to Africa. I bet on your damned Elaine that this crowd of kings were to appraise the respective

merits of the dame and Africa's Euphemia. You can thank your stars, old buck, your whisky was good. But garn! I must have some revenge and look you, you come to my capital next year and—and bring your wife with you. (*To Kings*). Now then, come along, you lot, unless you wish to stay the night. (*Going towards door*).

K. OF S.: A'm considering all the time and expense that has been lost.

KING OF FRANCE: (*as kings go towards door*). Bon soir, madame.

ALL THE KINGS: (*except K. of W., who has gone out*). Bon soir, madame. Oh, what a proper suck-in. (*Exeunt*.)

AENEAS: I'm disgraced, ruined, dishonoured—ah. (*To Courtiers*). But how is it you didn't know, ah? Come now; what then—ah?

COURTIERS: Our contention we should never have gone to Land of Mananaan. Looking for Eithne, silly. Then unexpectedly entrapped by guileless. Face-changing vileness. Yes—face-changing vileness. Our judgment here, perfect; in the underworld—a blur—a blur supervening on the perspicacity. Your fault, O King! in the circs. we were justified. (*They mumble together vivaciously*).

Hag plays and sings "Savourneen Deelish".

AENEAS: Why didn't I stick to Eithne! Poor Eithne surely gobbled up by an octopus. That air reminds me of her again. Oh, the might-have-beens—ah. The regrets not stilled even in the tomb but are heard in the bad winds screeching like demons and go on for ever. (*Turning head, to Courtiers*). Poetic—ah?

COURTIERS: Fair. Not rare or without compare. But fair—yes—fair.

ELAINE: Is it designedly you're playing it hag? (*In a rage, pulls blue cloak off hag, disclosing Eithne*).

AENEAS: Eithne! My Eithne! Come to my arms—ah? Now do—ah! I'll divorce her—upon my honour I will—ah, do come to my arms, Eithne!

EITHNE: No thanks, Aeneas. There was a time when sentimental twaddle used to move poor Eithne, but thank God! I have gained a little sense in the heel. By a stratagem I escaped from Mananaan and out of curiosity I disguised myself to take on the job of hag—out of curiosity to see how things were going here, and 'tis some satisfaction to me to know (*looking at Elaine*) that life doesn't be always serene with those who follow the Rule of 'win who will and damn the misser'! and I leave her to Peg. Good-bye, Aeneas, I have got a man of my own in the Prince of Achill, and we'll be getting married on a Wednesday. (*exit*).

AENEAS: She's gone! Some consolation to me that in other respects she has gone off—she's gone off a lot. (*Musingly*). But she mentioned—ah—Peg.

COURTIERS: (*smoothly*). We are discussing Peg.

ELAINE: (*going to Aeneas, intensely*). They are discussing Peg! Aeneas don't listen to the interested charlatans. Pull yourself together for once and be a man. Good Lord, how frightened, astonished and shocked you are looking, you a King, but they, nothing. Listen to me—I have been a good wife to you. Get rid of these advisers and we'll reign together the two of us, and I'll exert on your behalf those wits which God gave me will make you the most powerful king on the known earth in a manner you can brandish your fist in the puss of that cowboy the King of the World himself. Have I not learned to love you, Aeneas, and though you are cold now, you'll get fond of me again. This Peg is but a dairymaid, anyway. I may not be the wonder you thought me, but don't judge me as you would a chorus girl: I have a face good enough for a Queen. (*Seeing him unmoved she catches him by shoulder and shakes him*). Aeneas, at all

events, don't forget I'm the mother of your two children.

AENEAS: If they were mine—ah. (*Elaine shows signs of fury*). Don't be offended—Elaine—ah. You diddled your aspects you know—ah—and there is a presumption you might have diddled me in other respects—ah.

ELAINE: You are insulting in your weakness trying to excuse yourself to yourself for you have made up your mind and I have been wasting my breath. But I won't let it go with you, you shaper, for the whole world can recognise you in your brats' cocknoses.

AENEAS: They have—er—ah—fishy eyes—ah.

ELAINE: Of course they have. Wasn't I reared in fish. You're an idiot.

MARSE, DIARMUID: (*aside, to one another*). First time with her ever losing her temper. 'Tis all up a gum tree.

COURTIERS: We are further discussing Peg.

DONAL: But let Donal get his word in. Eithne didn't say how-dee-do to Donal, and Eithne didn't give him a bulls-eye. Elaine gives bulls-eyes to Donal but they aren't as good as the bulls-eyes Eithne used to give. That's not the point at all, for it's fixed I am; and Donal has changed his mind because Donal has all the sense. The Advisers might have notions, but Donal is immense. Peg Bigmouth is too young and pert, she bawls out without meaning: At the Races the King'll see faces, but Elaine is used to Queening.

AENEAS: (*to Courtiers*). Something in it—ah—and we mustn't be prejudiced by Elaine's outburst—ah—you give your decision without prejudice—ah—yes, absolutely—ah—there can be no compromise—ah—you know—ah—of course you know—ah—and, and, I like Peg—ah—but, Elaine is Elaine—ah—yes, give your decision without prejudice, and march to the deciding place to give it. (*Complacently, smiling, lying back in chair*). Advance then, my three learned Courtiers, and advance in rotation according to naming: Bawbee, Gloworm and Cynicas.

BAWBEE: (*coming forward quickly followed by the others*). Left—right—left—right—left—right—left. Halt!

GLOWORM: I am halting.

CYNICAS: I have halted.

BAWBEE: Exeunt—

GLOWORM: Omnes—

CYNICAS: Bow-wow! (*Short pause*). Bow-wow!

GLOWORM: Omnes—

BAWBEE: Exeunt. With—

GLOWORM: One—

CYNICAS: Accord.

BAWBEE: We—

GLOWORM: Decide.

CYNICAS: For

THE COURTIERs: Peg! (*They return to their places, mumbling*).

AENEAS: (*rising, laughing heartily at the discomforture of Donal*). Sold again, Donal the Fool! Well, madam, pack up, pack off, pop off—ah. (*Laughing unrestrainedly following Donal, the Courtiers go out*). Sold again, Donal the Fool! Sold again, Donal the Fool! (*Exeunt*).

ELAINE: 'Tis finished, my queening. Well, 'tis eight years I had of it anyway, and that's more than Eithne can say with all her fairy balls, and I don't begrudge

her her destiny—skidder and spuds up in hungry Achill, and if Peg has the job itself—the devil's cure to her, the ruddy faced slattern—she'll never have half the shine or the sway of Elaine the spanko.

MARSE: (*sourly*): 'Tis small the consolation. Peg eating her fine dinners for herself and we on the shaughraun. Oh woeful, woeful!

DIARMUID: (*aside to Marse*). 'Tis woeful, but don't be saying it to herself. 'Tis only the venom is making her give the last jerk; too soon she'll tumble with grief and I'm thinking she'll drown herself before the sun goes down.

ELAINE: (*seating herself and clasping hands on knees*). 'Tis a scruple surely that change should come on me and give me such a downblow when all chances were in my favour to reach the very pinnacle of happiness and power; which was to happen I'm telling you at the Sports next year in Greece with the King of the World presiding, it being my intention to put the come hether on him and give noody-nawdy Aeneas the go-by. And, it's to come here now he did the King of the World and seen me changed! Oh, 'tis a terrible scruple entirely.

MARSE: (*to D.*). Glory; and 'tis looking as high she was itself as that!

DIARMUID: And, she'd have hooked him. But now the thought of this almighty loss will but make the case fifty times worse with her. 'Twill be short work with her now making for the river, and sure, we must do the same.

MARSE: (*deprecatingly*). Faith, we needn't be in a hurry as all that to commit suicide on ourselves, Diarmuid.

DIARMUID: We needn't, but still I suppose we must, Marse.

ELAINE: (*rising*). Well, there's no good in crying over spilt milk. All was done that could be done, but fate is fate, the Queening is lost and there is no more about it.

MARSE: (*to Diarmuid*). Glory be! It couldn't be she'd be making a shape of bucking up again.

(*Walking about rapidly followed like dogs by Diarmuid and Marse*).

ELAINE: The batch are chuckling and laughing to themselves this minute, picturing the cut of me in my downfall, it being stuck in them I was bedazzled by the swank of being Queen of Erin. But if glory alone would satisfy Eithne or her likes, Elaine wouldn't be Elaine if she lost sight of the main point or didn't take precautions, against accidents. And if itself, I have missed the big thing I was looking for, it's a good hansel I'm telling you I collared out of the revenues during my eight years at this tack—well invested in East Anglia—and if the devil pinched the batch and in spite of their teeth it's in comfort we'll be whatever during the dear days of our lives.

DIARMUID AND MARSE: (*with delight and astonishment*). Glory be to God, Elaine!

ELAINE: I mightn't be Queen but I'll have a lot better time than Eithne, and maybe even a better time than Peg herself. 'Tis like the Kings faith, the King of England made no grins when I showed my face as if not having comprehended rightly the reports of the style of my loveliness: they do be saying they are a kind of stupid—the English. Anyway, if I don't land the King of England there are other chances—for an Earl over there is as big as a king here; then the roast beef is twice as good and they say there is no beating their fine cheeses.

MARSE: (*overcome with emotion*). Twice as good the roast beef and no beating the cheeses—Diarmuid!

DIARMUID: (*moved similarly*). Marse! (*They kiss*).

ELAINE: Indeed, 'tis tired enough I am of them here timing them and praising them, the ears cocked by them and they suspicious, in a manner you'd have to consider before letting the silliest word out of your mouth if you wouldn't find yourself in the middle of a revolt and a hillabilloo. So the batch can be laughing but there is consolation in my misfortune and Elaine isn't beat yet. Then whoop, let us joyful be, the spell words say, and hie over to England. (*Noise aloft*). But whist! is that a storm or is it some Irish Enchantment is coming to rightly spoil us in the heel?

MARSE: A storm it could be or a gust. But a sort of pawing you could nearly hear. If it isn't the hound it is.

VOICE ABOVE: And it is the hound it is.

For I am the Hound of Mananaan and I glide the air—aw-hee—aw-hoo—ah-hah!

The land I do come from is still without compare aw-hee—aw-hoo—ah-hah!

Reports have come to Lobster Claws that she is in pain,

The Lady I refer to is that wanton jade, Elaine;

Well, Phelim will marry her decent if it is her wish,

A happy home he'll give her—I needn't praise the fish:

Aw-hee; aw-hoo; ah-hah!

ELAINE: Nothing doing in the fish line, hound, thank Phelim all the same,

But the land that we're now bound for is the land of beef and game

Then chuck-chick-chook-chack; chuck-chick-chuck-chack—

DIARMUID AND MARSE: Chuck-chick-chook-chack; chuck-chick-chook-chack.

ELAINE, DIAR., MARSE: Chuck-chick-chook-chack. (*Throwing legs and arms about*). Then hie over to England. (*exeunt*).

HOUND: (*in puzzled voice*). Hie over to England.

This business and this knocking about have so ruined my poor head,

That upon my word and honour I wisht that I were dead;

I'll get me home right quickly and pop into my bed:

Aw-hee—ow-hoo—ah-hah! (*In the distance*). Aw-hee—ow-hoo—ah-hah!

Curtain

VERSE CHRONICLE

BY PADRAIC FALLON

Night Thoughts. By David Gascoyne. (Andre Deutsch. 10/6).

Poems. By Elizabeth Bishop. (Chatto & Windus. 8/6).

Winter's Right and Other Poems. By Elena Fearn. (The Hand & Flower Press. 8/6).

Poems Opuscular. By Michael Srigley. (Hodges & Figgis).

Time is a Squirrel. By Rhoda Coghill. (Published for the Author at The Dolmen Press. 5/- and 7/6).

The Faber Book of Modern American Verse. Edited by W. H. Auden. (Faber & Faber. 21s).

Poetry Now. Edited by G. S. Frazer. (Faber & Faber. 15s.)

'Normally', says Mr. Auden in introducing this new Anthology of Modern American Verse, 'in comparing the poetry of two cultures, the obvious and easiest point at which to start is with a comparison of the peculiar characteristics, grammatical, rhetorical, rhythmical, of their respective languages, for even the most formal and elevated styles of poetry are more conditioned by the spoken tongue, the language really used by the men of that country, than by anything else. In the case of British and American poetry, however, this is the most subtle difference of all and the hardest to define . . . What the secret of the difference is, I cannot put my finger on: William Carlos Williams, who has thought more than most about this problem, says that 'Pace is one of its most important manifestations' and to this one might add another, Pitch'

The poems gathered together in this magnificent selection then are not exactly what an American poet of equal standing to Mr Auden would select, though my fancy is that Mr. Auden includes a good deal that strictly does not come within the terms of his own British sensibility. In the case of some poets, however, he has transferred to me at least some new interest. I am one of those to whom Mr Carlos Williams has had little to say up to this, yet on the strength of one poem in this book I have made the magical contact, which in its way is the discovery of a climate. For DAPHNE AND VIRGINIA is in its detail almost as imageless as a piece of music but out of it comes the main image of a poem, the message of sensibility, and I realise why this poet has escaped my net heretofore. I have been looking for different qualities in the poet, for the pictorial element which under inevitable poetic stresses is pushed into image and symbol line by line, and which this poet does not use at all or very seldom.

Wallace Stevens is another difference, however, and this anthology does not solve it for me. Even the collected volume of this poet's work seemed to be in many minds about him, each with its own manner within the main and somewhat too designed modus of the man. The poems selected do not happen to be poems I like and I am left wondering if I have been admiring Stevens for what might be called his unAmerican activities, poems which are nearer to our European

sensibility than others. Much of his work, to my own mind, has not reached the clarification of the real thing, the simplification that silences difficulties, and I still consider that this side of him is represented too emphatically by the selection of later stuff made in this book.

The major names are all represented except T. S. Eliot and Laura Riding, who for reasons of her own did not contribute, and I consider the nuances of this anthology lack something by her absence. The eldest poet of the 81 represented is Edward Arlington Robinson who was born in 1869 and the youngest is Anthony Hecht born in 1922. In between those years is three quarters of a century of wilful experience, and on 81 different wave-lengths. To see it as a sort of unity is possible, but for myself I prefer to see it in terms of the person and the variety of the individual contribution. Two widely different styles of approach there are, however, the folksy and the rhetorical, and if we take Robert Frost as one, or E. E. Cummings, and John Crowe Ransome or Wallace Stevens as the opposite pole, we find most American verse inclining towards one or the other. Both modes are exciting, though Frost has always seemed garrulous to me and his simplicity verging on the phony, but then plain speech is the most difficult of all and is, indeed, one of those abstractions in itself which are merely theories of an ideal.

The fact is that there is no poetic language but the poet and that this anthology is a magnificent explication of the difficulties and the successes of modern American poets.

Poetry Now is an anthology of the younger British poets with some inclusions from Ireland, good poems from Thomas Kinsella and Richard Murphy, Ewart Milne, W. R. Rodgers and Maurice Craig. Mr. Kinsella's poem, *Baggot Street Deserta*, has an intriguing young-man theme—

A cigarette. The moon. A sigh
Of educated boredom. What,
Dear world, is the matter? What's to be thought,
What's to be done? All that I
Am sure of in this jaded night
Is the slow explosion of my pulse
In a wrist with poet's cramp, a tight
Beat tapping out endless calls
Into the dark, as the alien
Garrison in my own blood
Keeps constant contact with the main
Mystery, not to be understood.

There is a too fashionable imagery here, but redeemed by the last image I quote, and it seems to me the poem inhabits its time and place and possesses the final quality of any real thing.

One of Mr Richard Murphy's poems I selected for special mention in a poetry review for this magazine not long ago and I am glad to meet it here again. The other poem, *The Archaeology Of Love*, has a more generalised idiom, and all the personal catches do not seem to snap into place with the same finality.

About the selection as a whole no one can grumble. Some I can ponder on with that sweet feeling of adding to a hoard or broadening out beyond an exper-

ience. If I mention Terence Tiller especially, it is for the the kind of double-planned imagery he manages. I take a stanza of his poem, *Beggar*, to demonstrate :

Old as a coat on a chair ; and his crushed hand
as unexpressive as a bird's face, held
out like an offering, symbol of the blind,
he gropes our noise for charity. You could build
his long-deserted face up out of sand,
or bear his weakness as a child

As if a mask, a tattered blanket, should
live for a little before falling, when
the body leaves it ; so briefly in his dead
feathers of rags, and rags of body, and in
his crumpled mind, the awful and afraid
stirs and pretends to be a man.

Good poems from Donald Davie, Thomas Blackburn, D. J. Enright and other fine poets enliven what is rather a lumpy book. There is much that could profitably be left out, but on the other hand it is better to err on one side than the other.

Miss Rhoda Coghill's little book, *Time is a Squirrel*, does not, I think, on the whole enlarge the clear-cut effect of her last book which was notable for a direct pictorial quality and a painterly eye. For instance, I find the opening of the first poem vastly uninteresting poetically—

In a bowl, in a leaning ash-tree's roots,
water brims where the twisting roots writhe
like a young reptile's limbs. In this pool
water springs unheard, springs underwater,
in a continual gravelly gush
and circular fall of sand.
The creeping water thinly threads a way
between lizard limbs, to swell the wind-brushed lake,
to repel the little pushing waves,
pressing, pressing, infinitesimal and sure,
to cover any landmarks . . .

This is Miss Coghill the musician rather than Miss Coghill the poet and there is nothing to catch the eye and hold it over the poem. She is more successful in the Dunmore poem where the water-colours pick out definite articles that can wear-and-tear before the gaze, yachts, birds, the rising moon, those inhabitants of the sea-side day. What I miss in this slender volume is the trapped person finding personal release through Eliot's objective correlative. There is not enough contact with the underlying emotive fragments that come flying into one in authentic poetry. In other words there is nothing here to tell us if the poems are really necessary.

Poems Opuscular is a small volume by a young writer recently graduated from Trinity College. I consider it has enough to go on with. If the intangible thing is there, as it is in some images, it is touch-and-go but will eventually build

up its own particular modus. At the moment his sprightliness rings too archly—

Dear Tom, though I can but imagine
Your rich bequest of wrongs,
I ask that you let not your forebears
Break the fiddle in your songs.

May your beggar-man not grow barren
On a diet of Monaghan spuds,
Nor find his way to a Dublin bar
And join your 'long-haired' duds.

In *Winter's Right and Other Poems*, Miss Elena Fearn shows a neat turn for narrative. Her world, however, is some Nowhere of the mind and I cannot feel that this verse matters very much. Having accepted the limitations, one can enjoy the extravagances of fancy, the *Poltergeist*, the *Snowman*, *John Bunce*, and let me say she can get her way sometimes with the many-sided oblique—as in *The Death of Martha Brillow*—

A night remembered by the neighbours
(For what they were was plain to see) :
A revelation of the dead one ;
" Deep, and no better than she should be ! "

The lovers lolled around the table,
The whiskey went from glass to glass,
And none could break the magic circle
Where grief like whiskey seemed to pass.

At last, bleary-eyed, they saw the bottle
Empty in the middle stare,
And to each it looked like Martha
Whom each had fancied there.

That ghost designed to point homeward ;
And going, each felt the warm return
Of the sharp spirit ,the hand-on-elbow
Of the cold-faced woman they could not mourn.

Poems, by Elizabeth Bishop, come many-recommended, and critics like Richard Eberhart in America and Walter Allen in England have hailed her as something more interesting. I suppose once again, it all depends on what you require from a poet. In the poem she calls *The Map*, for instance, language is used with the delicate imagination that is beyond mere precision, but it seems to me that the language has over-awed the person. It is six of one and not half a dozen of the other—

The shadows of Newfoundland lie flat and still.
Labrador's yellow, where the moony Eskimo
has oiled it. We can stroke those lovely bays
under a glass as if they were expected to blossom,
as or if to provide a clean cage for invisible fish.

This is fancy giving itself a pictorial content and being elegant if not significant, but then comes a line that lifts the reverie and which, too, does more than charm us—

The names of seashore towns run out to sea.

What goes on, though, is a kind of poetic analysis in which the object seems to reduce the whole to its constituent parts while putting the picture together again. And picture, I think, is the operative and descriptive word. This poet is a still lifer.

The ice-berg cuts its facets from within.

Like jewellery from a grave

It saves itself perpetually . . .

Daring felicities such as those keep the work alive, but the main reaction I feel is that there is always a large and careful lens of fancy lifted between this poet and her material. She has the blood group of a standing mirror, an astonishingly embellished accuracy, but I can pass from her unmoved since in the process of making poetry she herself seems to be unmoved.

Night Thoughts, by David Gascoyne, on the other hand, is a dramatic poem in three parts made definitely with the object of moving us to consider the human predicament. It was a Third Programme piece and produced with music and what I would call descriptive voices, since there is no dialogue of the usual kind, and much is in prose form. In its way it is poetic analysis at its best, and yet it moves beyond the realms allotted to the poetic form of apprehension. A philosophical discourse might fit it, or fit the form, were it not for the fervent feeling and the dissillusionment and the hope, finally, that inform the poem—

‘Man has become above all the most indefatigable mimic of all the ways of being man that have ever been thought striking,’ says this poet in a cry out of the night. “Men imitate, and I am imitating them. I say ‘man’ and ‘men’ and invest abstractions with all my own deficiencies and think I somehow thus may be absolved of the whole failure to be truly man. I cry out of my darkness. I could not cry if I were in complete despair.”

It is a great-city night this, peopled not with giant despairs but the left-overs of the day, the tired feelings and the numb that seek some objective that is beyond the appetite. It is natural religion, indeed, seeking with that innate human thirst that has created all creeds, for the simplifying miracle that makes all men one inside it.

I confess it gives back to poetry its primal object. Mr Gascoyne has broken out the garden walls, and if the gods on the sheltered walks behind him have turned into conventional plaster-casts, the poet at any rate is walking naked and alive. ‘To cry out is not to despair’.

DRAMATIC COMMENTARY

A. J. Leventhal

WINTER WEDDING. By Tomás Mac Anna. Abbey Theatre playing at The Queen's Theatre.

NEKRASSOV. By Jean-Paul Sartre. Translated by Sylvia and George Leeson. Pike Theatre Productions playing at Gate Theatre.

THE LITTLE HUT. By André Roussin. Adapted by Nancy Mitford. Pike Theatre Productions playing at Gate Theatre.

THE MATCHMAKER. By Thornton Wilder. The Dublin Globe Theatre Co., playing at The Gaiety Theatre.

THE ENCHANTED (INTERMEZZO). By Jean Giraudoux. Translated by Maurice Valency. Dublin University Players.

The Americans have accustomed us to gangster films and gangster plays and whilst poetic and civil justice demand that it be shown that crime should only bring profit to the judge on an inevitable day of reckoning this side of eternity, it is essential for dramatic purposes that the malefactors should attract the public either by their skill, their looks, their straitened circumstances or their sense of adventure. After all Francis Drake might easily have been described by his looted victims as a pirate, and a communist state would act as ruthlessly as our own tribunals against any Robin Hood who despoiled its commissars even if it asserted that capitalists brought highwaymen upon themselves by an unfair division of worldly goods.

Winter Wedding plays hopefully on the potential popularity with the audience of a charming villain. In this case it is MacDara, a smuggler with his merry men, who defrauds the Revenue by transporting dutiable goods across the Donegal border. He runs a public house and keeps his gang merry by filling them with whiskey on at least which one assumes the excise authorities have collected their share. MacDara has a way with him and when the play begins brings home a bride who, though, like every one else in the vicinity, knows all about his activities, decides to withhold her favours until he reforms. It is all very improbable, as is the seeming impotence of the police to apprehend these open defiers of the law. It is his newly wedded wife who betrays MacDara in order to get her dismissed customs officer father reinstated. However she believes enough in bread, butter and comfort to wish to save her man from arrest. To keep him from joining in the almost mass foray across the border, she uses what is expected to pass for feminine allure on this, her wedding night. Here was a scene that required Dalilah drapery or Marilyn Monroe methods of male indoctrination but, one supposes, out of respect for moral squeamishness on the part of the audience Maire Ní Dhomhnaill descended from her boudoir dressed in a plain dark skirt and a blouse that hugged her throat.

Despite the lack of plausibility in the plot and the poor characterisation of the bride, there was a liveliness in the play that suggests that Tomás Mac Anna

is capable of more finished work. Minor characters like the ultimately obstreperous Red Man (T. P. McKenna showed great talent here) and MacDara's sister Minnie (Máire Kean assiduously acid) are evidence of his latent powers. Ray McAnally's interpretation of the main role was a splendid achievement for without acting skill he could not have succeeded in his personation of the publican smuggler who shifted from good nature to sternness and from tenderness to firmness of purpose without losing unity of character.

The Pike Theatre became temporary occupants of the Gate for a short season when they put on two such different types of comedies as *Nekrassov* and *The Little Hut*. Cut down considerably as compared with the Paris production, Sartre's kindly fun with Soviet politics is more successful in its truncated form although the farcical side of the picture still seems stretched more than its elasticity can bear. Here again we have the charming swindler who can talk himself out of the most difficult situations. Posing as an *émigré* politician who has filtered through the Iron Curtain, Georges de Valera is able to play upon the susceptibilities of self-seeking newspaper proprietors who, in turn, hope to raise the circulation of their journal by printing his supposed revelations. There is much scope for satire on all sides and Sartre shows that existentialism need not necessarily keep its adherents imprisoned in despair for here he can laugh, albeit sardonically, with as much abandon as the least self-conscious of the funmakers.

Topical allusions were brought up to date in this production and helped considerably to stress the author's satirical purpose. Donal Donnelly acted with a *verve* which was sustained throughout the whole of his long part. Among the many minor parts Ken Huxham gave a studied finish to his always-say-die Inspector Goblet and Arthur O'Sullivan was the kicked-around journalist to the half-life. Vehemence was carried too far by John Cowley as the director-ridden editor. The production as a whole was handled skilfully by Alan Simpson who might, nevertheless, have been a little more ruthless in the cutting studio.

If Deirdre McSharry had been engaged by the Abbey to play the bride in *Winter Wedding* no one could have complained about her lack of allure. Indeed, it was the want of subtlety in the exercise of her female wiles which detracted from her otherwise acceptable performance as Susan in *The Little Hut*. A desert island inhabited by Susan, her husband Henry and his friend Philip and the complications arising out of the sexual relationship of all three provide the fun. I was reminded of an old silent Russian film called *The Sofa* which had the same triangular problem. In the film the visiting male friend occupies the sofa when he shares the married couple's room in the crowded city of Moscow and when the love pattern changes it is the husband who moves across the room. The Russian story was serious but *The Little Hut* has no aim other than entertainment and can attain this if the audience decides not to be adult enough to be critical or modest enough to be censorious. Both John Whale and Leo Layden went through their capers with the confidence of Aldwych Theatre actors who believe in the laugh quality of their lines and Nancy Mitford's adaptation was an assurance that there would be no commitment to any U or non-U approach. If *The Little Hut* were a film the English Censorship Board would certainly have labelled it A.

Yet another comedy was the Globe Theatre Company's offering of Thornton Wilder's *The Matchmaker*. The author is here in a mood far removed from the

play which required Job to supply the title, *The Skin of our Teeth*. But the experimental urge of the playwright will not be stilled and he cheerfully breaks the modern canon of dramatic technique by making ingenious use of soliloquy. Dolly Levi, appearing to arrange everybody else's matrimonial affairs, is really only concerned about her own and she triumphantly lands her man and his money on the runway of her ambition. She takes her dead husband and the audience into her confidence in a long speech delivered from a spot on the stage just above the orchestra. It would be idle to pick out portions of Eithne Dunne's performance of this part for praise, so carefully studied was the whole, but inevitably her rendering of this soliloquy stood out in its sly, quiet intimacy in which her manner seemed more self-revelatory than the matter of the script. The action of the play takes place in the early eighties but the whole technical conception belongs to a much earlier period of dramatic history and the humour is in no whit lessened by its near-Restoration exuberance. This was an ambitious and successful undertaking and the able cast worked well under the direction of Jim Fitzgerald who also showed originality in his setting designs.

Room must be found for Louis Lentin's production of Giraudoux's *The Enchanted* as given by the Dublin University Players. Seldom can amateurs have given so smooth a performance of so subtle a play—subtle because it is difficult to make your audience believe that a high-spirited young girl can fall in love with a ghost (no matter how material) and even for a moment appear to prefer life-in-death to the colourful existence which the spectre's rival, a young civil servant in the weights and measures department, offers her. The Pilgrim Players introduced this piece to Dublin some four or five years ago but that its revival was justified was shown by the enthusiasm of the College Players' audience who appreciated the conflict between rationalism and mysticism. Jocelyn Szell made a delightfully sympathetic Isabel, speaking with all the unaffected sincerity of trusting youth. The minor parts were also remarkable even if Heather Lasky and Francis Gibbs sacrificed clarity of speech to exuberance. Most remarkable of all was the performance of the schoolgirls whose open-air team work suggested experience in responding to the exhortations of their captain on the field of sport.

Art Notes

by Arland Ussher

OIL PAINTINGS AND WATER-COLOURS BY NANO REID. Dawson Gallery.
 PAINTINGS BY PATRICK PYE. Dublin Painters' Gallery.
 PAINTINGS OF PARIS BY ROBERTSON CRAIG, R.H.A. Ritchie Hendriks Gallery.
 PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS BY PAUL HENRY, R.H.A. Bray.
 FRENCH QUAYSIDES BY CECIL MICHAELIS. Ritchie Hendriks Gallery.
 PICASSO ETCHINGS AND SCULPTURE BY PANCHOUT. Ritchie Hendriks Gallery.
 EXHIBITION BY THE FIFTEEN CLUB. Dublin Painters' Gallery.

Nano Reid is an infrequent exhibitor, and it was therefore a special pleasure to see her recent show, taking in as it did such a wide stretch of her development as a painter. Miss Reid seems to have been influenced, like the earlier Gerard Dillon, by the sculptural plaques on Celtic crosses; her pictures tend to divide into compartments—often to the detriment of their compositional unity. The eye

passes from space to space without a definite focus, and without relation between the spaces other than the distance of the spectator and the odd angle of vision. Unlike some of Gerard Dillon's, Nano Reid's pictures do not "tell a story", though they are seen with a narrator's eye; they are landscapes—generally of her favourite Boyne country, for which her peculiar archæological treatment seems to have a natural suitability. These landscapes are viewed from above, as by a disembodied spirit, or by one of those birds which she is so fond of depicting—circling furiously in the *avant-plan* of her pictures. Often, as here in *Old Town on the River*, the planes and spaces are deliberately jumbled, as if seen by the proverbial bird which could be in several places at once: a method which is, of course, that of the abstractionist, and could be very successful if Miss Reid did not use so much descriptive, and over-bewildering, detail. Sometimes again, her pictures are subjective and visionary, as in *Egyptian Head and the City* (but the profile head has, in fact, nothing Egyptian), or the very beautiful *Sea Voices*—one of her typical Co. Louth coast scenes, with singing heads. But this fine picture was a little spoiled for me by its passage of mauve (surely orange here would have better assisted the mood, and been more harmonious). Generally it must be said that Nano Reid is over-partial to mauves and pinks, as in *Autumn Seashore* and the interesting, almost abstract, *Sea-wrack*; and her handling of brilliant colours tends to be sticky and unpleasant. On the other hand, her sombre greens and blues can be most satisfying, as in *Légende, St. Ciaran* and *A Norman Castle* (the last, especially, a very finely-balanced composition); and I would also like to praise the adjacent *Padraic on the Island*, but that the man's figure seemed to be—without sufficient artistic necessity—an anatomical mess. Other good pictures were *Getting Fish*, the swirling *Cairn on the Rocks* and the very sprightly *Donegal Lake*, which conveys a rare mood of joy. Nano Reid's animals are generally delicious, and I liked the cow in the last-named picture, as well as the cats in two of her pictures here shown.

Miss Reid's water-colours seem to me less interesting, suffering from her too common faults of opaque colour and texture. Nano Reid is really too serious a worker and too much preoccupied with formal problems to be at home in this medium—which is not to say that she is not at her best in a gay mood. Many of her oil-paintings here (such as *Donegal Lake* and *Sea Voices*) are indeed as exhilarating as the best modern "primitives". And this can also be said of her water-colours *Farmyard* and *River Landmark and Bird*.

In general, Nano Reid is one of the most interesting and experimental of our painters, combining a semi-abstractionism with real regional feeling and interpretation. In a world where regionalism is given over to the philistines, while art tends to become as cosmopolitan as restaurant-food, it is a refreshing combination.

Evie Hone in glass and M. Brandt in murals have shown that the Christian tradition can inspire Irish painters, even today. Patrick Pye is showing the same thing in easel-painting, though his world is that of the German and Flemish primitives rather than of Chartres or Padua. Mr. Pye is in no danger of overcrowding his pictures; the space above the heads in his Dürer-like *Visitation* has perfect rightness, and he realises the dramatic and psychological value of distance. His figures (as in *Christ Entering Jerusalem* or *The Virgin of St. John of the Cross*) often have lonely paths stretching away from them; and the former picture

falls, in fact, with complete naturalness, into a cruciform design. In the several versions of *The Way of the Cross*, however, there is too little humanity in proportion to symbolism; we are shown simply a Way, rising naturally uphill, and marked out with crosses—almost as mathematical as a golf-course. Such economy of statement can be moving, but one feels here that the symbolism is literary and not painterly—being in fact little more than an illustration of the title. This is not generally true of Mr. Pye, whose figures would powerfully express grief or solitude, wondering expectation or deep humility, even if we did not know the subjects—and who achieves these effects simply by his taut, nervous line and tender transparent colour. And that Mr. Pye can employ the same means in landscape can be seen in *The Lower Suburb and River at Toledo* (no. 13 among the various versions of this subject); this picture is based on a scheme of ellipses, and the evening sky and the Persian-blue knoll in the right of the foreground have the lyrical intensity of Daniel O'Neill. Occasionally there are clashes in Mr. Pye's drawing between the distortion of details (such as the hands in *Mater Dolorosa*) and the careful rendering of the remainder (such as the beautiful head in the same picture); though in general Mr. Pye knows what he is about when he takes liberties with the human form—the movement of the arms and shoulders in *St. Joseph and the Child Jesus* is just hinted at and just right. Some of Patrick Pye's smaller pictures are lovely in their sharp design and gem-like colour—such as the greens of *The Virgin*, the rich browns of *A Franciscan* and the brilliant red of *Poor Boy*: all pictures which perfectly convey a mood, without the occasional emotional oppressiveness of the larger works. And that their effect does not depend merely on the accomplished glazed tempera technique is proved by some of Mr. Pye's black-and-white illustrations to T. S. Eliot. These little drawings, illustrating *The Rock* and *The Hollow Men*, are scattered through two manuscript copies of the poems, lovingly made by Mr. Pye at an earlier age; which we feel certain will some day be prized by collectors. Patrick Pye's prevailing mood is the Dark Night of the Soul and what Yeats called the triple terror of love, but that he is capable of more human phases of feeling is shown in *Dancer* and the delicate little picture, *Lovers*.

With Robertson Craig we are in a frankly more conventional world, but one which has at least air, light and breathing life. Many of Mr. Craig's smaller paintings of Paris street-scenes are quite entrancing; it is only in his larger works that his weakness as a designer becomes apparent, so that even his colour appears dull and the general effect flat. I suspect that one could, with a scissors, cut very charming small pictures out of most of his large canvases; but the fact that one could do so proves that what charms one in Mr. Craig is the poise of a figure, the texture of a dress or a sudden spill of light rather than the power to organise these details. Thus his excellent *Students in Montparnasse* has an ill-managed corner, and another picture splits in two over the Seine bridge which should draw it together. One is at times reminded of the plein-air paintings of Bastien-Lepage, and *The Striped Awning* has an air of an early Jack Yeats. On the whole, these pictures have much freshness, style which is not mere stylishness, and the tang of a good apéritif. They show Mr. Craig in a happier, freer vein than his better-known portrait-painting.

Robertson Craig paints chiefly in sunlight, but Paul Henry—another extravert painter remote from present trends—shows Nature in all moods. You

can feel the vapour just turning to rain in *The Fishing Boat*, and the swift oncoming of night in *Waterville, Co. Kerry*. It was well worth the trouble of a visit to Bray to be able to judge the achievement of this foremost of Irish landscapists, as the world—probably rightly—regards him. Good paintings of mountain-scenes are rare; only the Chinese ornamental treatment seems quite happy with them, and when Western painters approach them they tend to fall either into the grandiosely desolate or the wispily sentimental. If the Alps or the Scottish Highlands have had good painters, one cannot call them to mind. After all is said against Henry's repetitiveness (and there is much subtle variation in this exhibition), he at least discovered a way of seeing almost as personal, as deceptively simple, as that of the *méridional* Céria. People, apparently, had never looked at the West of Ireland until this Northerner lent them his eyes.

Before the pictures of Mr. Michaelis, a visiting artist of very exceptional technical ability, one felt alternating reactions. We were at first slightly put off by this architecture of (apparently) glistening icing-sugar, then fascinated by the marvellous range of tone in the river-reflexions or in an expanse of wall—the firm modelling of the bulked buildings (as in *Bassin de Saint-Victor*)—the deftness and decision of brushwork in the line of tree or falling shadow. Occasionally, as in *Quai aux Fleurs*, he just grazes the fuzzily sentimental, and in *Le Vieux Port, Marseille*—where he for once deserts his austerity of colour—he produces something slightly chaotic; but these are exceptions, and most of his designs are—in their chosen convention—of a perfection rarely seen among us. But, finally, do not these works tend to be a little wearisome—like décors for ballet in a theatre-hall deserted? It is perhaps ungrateful to hint as much before paintings of so sure and magical a touch.

We saw little more than Rue de la Paix stylishness in the metal figures by Panchout in the same exhibition. The Picasso etchings from the '30's of which a new selection was shown, delighted us, like the previous showing, by their sunny, archaic, Mediterranean serenity—a change both from the master's cubist experiments of the '20's and his later shocker-abstractions, which stem from the experience of the Spanish War. Among these Jove-like (and jovial) old men, centaurs, bulls, and flute-girls with piping lips, the torment of the modern consciousness is for the moment out of sight. But it is interesting to notice, in these light sculpturesque fantasies, the evolution of the faceted Picasso female head—as if by an attempt to reproduce in two dimensions the planes of the marble.

On a (naturally) humbler level, there was some good work in the exhibition of the Fifteen Club. Mary Olive Hussey's *Harcourt Terrace* had mystery and atmosphere, and Vera O'Connell's *Red Sailing Boat* had a lacquer-like brilliance, attained partly by the perfect placing of the sail. Paul Kavanagh is a painter of delicacy, and there was real limpid light and water in *Flight* and *Beach Scene*.

BOOK REVIEWS

EARLY IRISH LYRICS. EIGHTH TO TWELFTH CENTURY. Edited with Translation, Notes and Glossary by Gerard Murphy. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press. 42s. net.

Professor Murphy has made a collection of some of the best verses written in Irish between the eighth and twelfth century, with an informative introduction, English prose translations of the poems, copious notes, a glossary of Old Irish words and an explanatory index of names. As he states in his preface, every poem in the anthology has been printed before and most of them have been translated. He also, with disarming modesty, acknowledges his debt to previous editors and translators, and states that the earlier versions of Kuno Meyer, Whitley Stokes, Strachan, Standish O'Grady and Professor Kenneth Jackson have been consulted by him and have "often resulted in considerable improvement in style and wording".

Some fifty-eight poems are given, some very short, some long. He has divided it into two sections, "monastic" and "secular", but the former, though probably the work of monks, are not necessarily religious poems. The first of all is that well-known monk's poem about his cat, "Pangur Bán". The "secular" section includes poems from the Finn-cycle and a number of nature poems from the Old Irish tale "Buile Suibhne Geilt" and some ancient love poems from wonder-tales. Most of the poems are beautiful, some with a strange, surprising beauty, others contain beautiful passages and all of them are interesting. Some of them are already known in modernised Irish versions. For instance, it was from a modernised version of "Isucán" that Patrick Pearse got the idea for his well-known short story "Iosagán". The poems attributed to Saint Columcille and others in this collection are given in modernised Irish by Professor Tomás O Raithile in his anthology "Measgra Dánta". Translations into present-day Irish of some of them have been executed by Tomás O Floinn in his recently published book "Athbheo". In Professor Murphy's volume we get careful versions of what seem the oldest and most accurate texts.

It is easier to translate these poems into metrical modern Irish than into English prose in which much of the effect of the original verse is inevitably lost. Some of the poems, as I have said, are very short, and the short poems are among the best. One poem of only a quatrain, which I do not remember meeting before, is the only satire in the collection. It is so good that I would like to give it here.

Ro-cúala
ní tabair eochu ar dúana
do-beir a n-í as dúthaig dó
bó.

Professor Murphy renders this; "I have heard that he gives no steeds for poems; he gives what is native to him, a cow". Here the metrical effect of the original, and the sharp crack of the final monosyllabic rhyme is lost—although the

translation is a faithful one. This old metre "bas re tóin" would be worth reviving. An Englishman, Professor Walter Raleigh, having learned from Kuno Meyer, of Liverpool University, of this metre, attempted some English verses in a similar metre, beginning:—

"Men and bards
I, whom my dull brain retards
Cannot write a line that beats
Keats."

Professor Murphy brings to his work a sound scholarship and painstaking industry which render his translations especially valuable, and his texts are very reliable. All must appreciate the fact of so many gems from our old manuscript literature being collected together in the one volume, with such carefully collated texts and scholarly annotations, and those who know nothing of Old Irish, or whose knowledge of it is severely limited, will rejoice in the assistance given by his learned translations. They enable the general reader, Irish or English, to make acquaintance with much of what was best in the literature of ancient Ireland. To a person who comes to the subject with a fresh mind, knowing little about it—that is to say, to the majority of Irish men and women—Professor Murphy's book will come as a revelation, opening up a new world of imaginative creation, a new way of thinking, things which are strange, but strangely beautiful. Critics may quarrel with his renderings of some lines, but the final verdict must be that Professor Murphy has done a fine piece of work, of great value to all interested in ancient Ireland, and done it with great skill and scholarship.

P. B.

CRITICAL APPROACHES TO LITERATURE. By David Daiches. Longmans. 25s.

The professional literary critic is sometimes held up as a particularly horrid example of the man who batters on the genius he has himself been denied. He is accused to-day of having a purely erosive function and blamed for the indifference of contemporary youth to literature in general. That he is scarcely a name to the complacent non-readers is a fact blandly ignored. Dr. Daiches's brilliant study is sufficient answer for it demonstrates the significance of the labours, interpretations and judgments of literary criticism, and its impressive service to the writer and his public.

To investigate the nature both of literature and criticism, Dr. Daiches has, in the three parts of his book, considered—noting how often they overlap—the major approaches: the answers given to the question, "What is the nature of imaginative literature; what is its use and value?"; the practical evaluation of specific works; the enquiry that includes psychological, sociological and other factors and traces their relationship.

"I am concerned with methodology, with the varying ways in which the art of literature and works of literature can be profitably discussed; I am not here concerned with critics as such or with the history of criticism as such. . . . Clear conceptions concerning the different things the literary critic can do and has done seem to me the primary requisite for a serious interest in literary criticism."

Though Dr. Daiches stresses that he has provided neither a history of criticism nor an annotated anthology, a book that begins with Plato and Aristotle, and from Sidney, Dryden, Dr Johnson, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley,

Arnold, turns to such modern writers as I. A. Richards, Auden, T. S. Eliot, Ransom, Elton, Empson, F. R. Leavis, and allows them adequate space to develop their arguments, may at least be said to offer an impressive number of stimulating patterns and a wealth of relevant detail. His own scrutinies are designed to help the reader formulate the proper questions as well as find the answers—"To ask the right questions is as much a test of critical maturity as to give the right answers".

The viewpoint of this very distinguished and rewarding book—a Defence of Criticism—is eloquently presented:

"To enjoy with discrimination, to discern value, to recognize and reject the spurious, to respond maturely to the genuine, never to be fooled by the shabby and the second-hand—that is the civilized approach to the arts. We turn to criticism to develop and strengthen the approach; and, as we have seen, criticism can come to this task directly or indirectly, through a frontal attack on individual literary works, through theoretical discussion of the nature of literary value, through investigation of origin and growth and causation. Every effective literary critic sees some fact of literary art and develops our awareness with respect to it; but the total vision, or something approximating it, comes only to those who learn how to blend the insights yielded by many critical approaches."

VICTOR HUGO. By André Maurois. Translated by Gerard Hopkins. Cape. 30s.

Romanticism is not a literary movement. It is a state of mind. 'Thy friends are exultations, agonies'—the critic might say to the romantic. And Hugo is the romantic *par excellence*. He set out to be a French Shakespeare and failed; but then the France of Louis Philippe was a little different from the England of Elizabeth. It is not his rhetoric which impresses us to-day, but his lyricism, his delicate perceptions, his sensibility; and, in his prose, his magnificent and vivid presentation of the contemporary scene, envisaged by the eyes of a shrewd observer, but with a touch of the prophet added to relate it to human destiny. No book has more life and character packed into every page of it than Hugo's *Choses Vues* and it is the mere over-plus of his talent.

And the man? Between the god-like, chaste and hopeful youth, and the octogenarian amorist, may seem to stretch a great gulf, but actually they are linked by the persistence of the poet within. Of his youth he had written "I had paradise within my heart." In his old age, in his diary for January 9th, 1884, he scribbled down these words,

Triste, sourd, vieux,
Silencieux,
Ferme tes yeux
Ouverts aux cieux.

That had been the parable of life, the splendid dawn, the disillusioned acceptance of dusk. But he could still describe paradise; he could still remember the skies. He is less effective as a teacher. His sentiments tend to become inflated to the point of bombast. In religion one has the feeling that he is patronising God. It is true that he tells us that he prayed 'continually during the day'; but it is significant that what he prayed for was power to fulfil his own destiny. He could never have said with Patmore "for want of me the world's course will not

fail." He was convinced that like Ezekiel he had a very essential part to play in God's purpose. The spirits whom he had encountered table-turning in Jersey had assured him that he was a Wise Man chosen to guide humanity. Like Yeats he was an anti-cleric, and like Yeats his interest in occultism may be the explanation. He must be allowed to devise his own dogma.

In his will Hugo affirmed 'God. The soul. Responsibility.' But there is more than a touch of exploitation in his human relationships, and his sense of responsibility does not seem to have extended to maidservants. He hymned childhood, he hymned the family; but his children unquestionably helped to foot the bill for his egoism, and one of the most illuminating letters in this illuminating book by André Maurois, is when his daughter, to whose melancholy and listlessness in Guernsey, Madame Hugo had been drawing attention for years, fled to Canada in pursuit of a reluctant suitor and there went out of her mind, and Hugo writes to his wife:— "She will forget and she will get well. The poor child has never yet been happy; it is high time she started. I will give some parties for her at Hauteville House, to which I will invite the most intelligent people I can lay my hands on. *I will dedicate books to Adèle.* I will make her the crown of my old age. I will glorify her exile. I will make all good. If a fool has the power to dishonour, Victor Hugo will have the power to shed splendour! Later when she is cured and cheerful, we will find a decent, honourable husband for her."

It was a little late for such fatuity. Adèle was beyond all such attentions by then. The one obligation which Hugo never forgot was the obligation to his own genius. And it is by his genius that we must ultimately judge him. By it he stands vindicated. As the apostle of compassion he is to France what Dickens was to England. As a word artist he is supreme. Occasionally his eloquence may seem to run away with him. But he is always capable of saying the thing simply and with tremendous force, as in that closing sentence of *Choses Vues*, where, after enumerating the many famous as well as humble people whom he has known in life he tells us that experience has taught him that "there is only one thing in the world to which we should bow, that is greatness; and one thing to which we should *kneel* and that is goodness. It is well said." One can forgive many frailties and many inconsistencies to a man who can say anything as well and as simply as that.

MONK GIBBON.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE FRENCH POETS. VILLON TO THE PRESENT DAY.

By Geoffrey Brereton. Methuen. 25s. net.

Mr. Brereton is the most persuasive advocate because he believes in enjoyment. It is more important to have a dictionary at hand when reading French poetry than a manual of versification. In addition to the dictionary, "a feeling for English poetry as diversely based as possible is the best equipment for reading poetry in French or any other language." Cheered by such sympathetic encouragement we set out on our pilgrimage from Villon to Aragon, and for my own part there was never a dull moment. As might be expected from one who is an authority on Racine, his essay on the great dramatist is inspired and illuminating. This for example, "From the Greek dramatists he learnt to ponder the great spiritual crises which befall humanity, magnified to the proportions of mythical catastrophes". He also stresses the mesmeric quality of the royal language of Racine

when acted or read aloud, for example, the extraordinary incantatory power of the following line composed of a few simple ordinary words, "Mais tout dort, et l'armée, et les vents, et Neptune."

On Ronsard and Verlaine, the two loves of my youth, both exquisite artists, who owed their inspiration to their own personal joys and sufferings, Mr. Brereton writes with balance and perception. He considers as I do also, that the Sonnets to Hélène are the highwater mark of Ronsard's poetry. They are more particularised, more full of concrete detail. Hélène emerges as a most enchanting and individual girl and not an artificial pastoral concept as in the Marie sequence.

Verlaine is a spell-binder, the opposite number to Debussy in music, and although his reputation stands to-day far below Rimbaud's, our author considers him an excellent poet, particularly in "Fêtes Galantes", "La Bonne Chanson", and "Romances sans Paroles". "In the imponderable qualities of the verse of this period consists Paul Verlaine's chief gift to French poetry . . . they avoid all definition of feeling, and still more all summing up . . . Their landscapes are imprecisely sketched and related to the inner mood." He is not so kind to the poet's later work, so full of tearful diffuseness, and with truth and wit remarks, "Really by this time Verlaine had disintegrated, and what flies about us as we progress through this increasingly fluffed-out verse is not feathers but kapok."

In each of the chapters there is a biographical sketch, so that the reader can visualise the poet in his background. There are not many quotations, but the quality and appropriateness of those included is such as to make us hope that Mr. Brereton will one day edit an anthology of his favourite poems. In the Rimbaud chapter it was a delight and a re-affirmation to find, after the masterly analysis of the symbolist and surrealist "Bateau Ivre", the following perfect little lyric, which seems to speak for all those who from youth have lived so long in the world of the imagination that they have little taste for life.

"Oisive jeunesse
A tout asservie,
Par délicatesse
J'ai perdu ma vie."

This is creative and not destructive criticism, and the writer's understanding and appreciation are extraordinarily wide. From Villon to Verlaine, from Du Bellay to the latest poets he has something of instructive interest to say about them all. The only one he dislikes is Victor Hugo, "Unsubtle and uninhibited, he gives himself away with the lavishness of the born showman. Even in love poetry in which most French poets excel, Hugo consistently ignores the golden rule which is to write of the beloved and not the lover."

A true defender of the poetic faith Mr. Brereton says "However remotely he seems to live, he (the poet) has in fact, a better understanding of the spirit of the age than the statesman or the factual chronicler." The whole book is a real encouragement to the young beginner, and to the old beginner also! "Read the poets" he says, you will gain untold riches and benefits."

MONA GOODEN.

ALMANAC AND OTHER POEMS. By John Redwood Anderson. (Macdonald, 15s.).

That anyone should remain indifferent to John Redwood Anderson's work after all these years, during which he has published memorable poetry, or that anyone should question his stature, passes the comprehension of those who survey independently the literary skies. *Almanac and Other Poems*, his latest work, is not to be regarded simply as his sixteenth volume but as an epitome of all the previous collections. Here is his ever-ripening wisdom, expressed over and over again through his gift of narrative and symbolism, lyricism and human understanding: the experiences of young manhood and maturity have come to a point of rest.

He is still the lover: the title-poem "Almanac" and his thirteen sonnets on "Love and Friendship" are finely co-relative. Nor are human beings and nature the objects exclusively of his love, for his adoration of all living creatures is everywhere—the wind bloweth where it listeth, and if there is anyone sufficiently unbelieving still to question whether the profound can ever be matched in a complex age with simplicity, Mr. Anderson's lyric "To a Lark" (written during a total eclipse) surely offers conviction:

Do you not know my lovely lark,
moon does but hide the sun's bright light,
that you have taken this false dark
to authentic night?

The country of the mind and the country of sense make a superb blend in *Almanac and Other Poems*, a book which leaves the reader with an inward glow.

THOMAS MOULT.

THE TRIAL OF THOMAS CRANMER. By Anne Ridler. Faber & Faber. 12/6.

FIRE IN HEAVEN. By Dannie Abse. Hutchinson & Co. Ltd. 8/6.

THE SQUARE FELLOW. By Brendan Behan. Methuen & Co. Ltd. 10/6

TWILIGHT OF A WARRIOR. By Walter Macken. Macmillan & Co., Ltd. 8/6.

The modern urge to write verse plays on religious subjects initiated by T. S. Eliot and followed by such writers as Christopher Fry, Ronald Duncan, and Norman Nicholson does not seem to have spent itself. Anne Ridler, who has already (among other works) a Nativity play to her name, now publishes *The Trial of Thomas Cranmer*, twenty years after Charles Williams' play on the same subject. This appears opportunely on the fourth centenary of Cranmer's death. Mrs. Ridler has wisely chosen the closing stages of the martyr's life for treatment, thus providing the occasion for closely knit drama, the avoidance of scattered scenes and the host of characters that a whole life story might demand. As it is, there are eighteen members in the cast but apart from the central figure they play but small parts. We meet Cranmer's wife and Mrs. Ridler cannot resist the temptation to let her retell the old story of how, when the law was passed forbidding priests to marry, she accompanied her husband on his travels:

... people said

You kept me in a chest with holes bored for air

And carried me about with you.

Cranmer's swaying from loyalty to his sovereign queen to the Reforming dictates of his conscience provides adequate drama which is enhanced by the

brain-washing tactics of the Spanish friars. His recantation followed by its recantation makes excellent theatre. The introduction of *The Witness* as a kind of Chorus, becoming at one time part of the action and at another looking back from this century, is an ingenious device. There is something of a shock (a not unpleasant one) to hear the contemporary note expressed in the assessment by *The Witness* of what his own reaction might have been if he, like Cranmer, had been compelled to spend two years in prison and then forced to face his captors. All that feeds courage would have died in him :

I should look out on the world with the eyes
Of the couldn't-care-less girl behind the counter :
Careless eyes that see nothing worth the trouble
Of looking at, much less the trouble of dying.

Fire in Heaven has not the theatrical advantage of being based on a particular historical incident. There is less stress on character than on human weakness and pain—pain that resolves into unbearable suffering from which there is no escape. The drama moves on a different plane, reflecting the inexorable exercise of power against those who would oppose it, the power too of faith, the humility of sacrifice which might well turn into pride. This is a poet's play by a young writer who has still to acquire the cunning necessary to carve his lines into the shape demanded by the stage. Dannie Abse's verse can reach worthy heights but seems on occasion to fall into a self-conscious modernism :

If I could only go.
Leave this lit world whose sun is suffering
Along corridors of chloroform.

This Magazine has already dealt fully with the two other plays mentioned at the head of this note when they first appeared on the stages of the Pike and Abbey Theatres respectively. It seems strange that no comment is made on the first performance in Dublin of Brendan Behan's work and that *The Theatre Royal*, Stratford, London, E.15 would appear to be given the credit. There seems to be an escape clause in the statement that "this version of *The Quare Fellow* was first presented" at the above-mentioned theatre. But even if the version differs substantially from the original one, mere politeness should have evoked a statement of the venue of the play's first showing.

A. J. L.

SCÉALAIÓCHT NA RÍTHE. By Tomás Ó Floinn, M.A., and Proinnsias Mac Cana M.A., PH.D. Illustrated by Micheál Mac Liammóir. Sáirséal agus Dill. 21s.

One of the sad results of the long break in the development of modern Irish literature was the separation of the modern reader from the literature of the past. Even the few who studied Old and Middle Irish could only with difficulty reach the old stories hidden away in manuscripts and journals to be found in a few libraries. For the others not so equipped, some stories were published in modern Irish and some in English in journals and books long out of print. It is only recently that a new beginning has been made to give the old literature in modern Irish in books now available to the ordinary reader. This break with tradition has had an effect on modern Irish writing which has been developing without

roots. Possibly the bridging of the gap may give a more virile literature in future with less copying of foreign trends so often decadent. This present book is a contribution towards mending the breach. It gives examples of different types of tales about the kings of long ago. The originals were starkly told, perhaps serving merely as notes for narrators. This style has been retained in the volume under review as if offering the tales for future writers to develop. In that case, it would have been better to give the original stories in full, instead of giving extracts from them.

The print is good and very clear. The illustrations are beautiful and imaginative in strange contrast to the starkness of the tales. There are some inaccuracies: Ériu XI mentioned on p. 28 should be Ériu XII, and Ériu III on p. 132 should be Ériu V. I have not the other references to hand for verification. There is an omission in the text in the second paragraph on p. 133 which obscures the opening of the tale, and "druthu" has been mistranslated "draoithe" in the first paragraph on the same page. The grammar is occasionally a little erratic, but the language is for the most part clear and pleasing.

These tales would not appeal to children, but adults, who have not already had the opportunity, will find here a good introduction to the early literature.

L.D.

THE OSSIANIC LORE AND ROMANTIC TALES OF MEDIEVAL IRELAND. By Gerard Murphy. Published for the Cultural Relations Committee of Ireland by Colm Ó Lochlainn, Dublin. At the Sign of the Three Candles. 2s.

It is no easy task to summarise the vast extent of Ossianic Lore and Romantic Tales in a booklet of sixty-nine pages, yet Gerard Murphy has done so with the scholarly clarity which is his. His arrangement of the subject-matter is admirable. Not many extracts could be given in such short space, but we are told where to find the tales and poems mentioned, and books for further reading are listed.

GREECE BEFORE HOMER. Ancient Chronology and Mythology. By John Forsdyke. Max Parrish. 18s. 6d.

Books on prehistoric Greece with their weighty apparatus are, as a rule, left severely to the specialist. Sir John Forsdyke, however, with no trace of condescension, has written an introduction to the archæological and literary records of the period that can be enjoyed by the reader ignorant of Greek as well as appreciated by the scholar.

"The purpose of the book is to explore the processes by which prehistoric narratives were adopted in historical Greek literature and elaborated with realistic details of genealogy and chronology. The archæological documents are authentic records of the times that they represent, but they do not explain themselves. The literary statements are explicit, but unauthentic in the sense that they were not contemporary with the events that they describe. Such testimonies cannot legitimately be used to explain archæological discoveries unless they are themselves supported by external evidence."

This patient examination of Greek chronography shows the first historians industriously at work, even if they had "no notion of an era and little sense of time in its larger aspects"; and here are noted the results of genuine research as well as the heroic chronologies of the romantic compilers, and also the frauds that

prehistoric scripts so readily invited. The Greek historian, even if he attempted an objective attitude to myth and legend—and, as is explained, the intellectual Greek rejected fiction in principle rather than in practice—had “no prehistoric documents, no comparative material, no archæological experience and no access to foreign records”; and he received no help from the epic poets and the dramatists.

Sir John's own critical standards and something of the value of his contribution to classical studies may be indicated by his final comment: “Archæological discovery may throw light upon the legends, but the use of legendary statements for historical interpretation of material records is a reversal of proper procedure. It is not far removed from the ancient practice of constructing archæological documents to fit the legends, and reproduces the credulity without the piety of the Lindian and Theban priests”.

THE RECORDS OF MEDIEVAL ENGLAND. An Inaugural Lecture. By C. R. Cheney. Cambridge University Press. 3s. 6d.

SAGA AND MYTH IN ANCIENT IRELAND. By Gerard Murphy. Printed for the Cultural Relations Committee of Ireland by Colm O Lochlainn, Dublin: At the Sign of The Three Candles. 2s.

In his inaugural lecture delivered in Cambridge in November, 1955, C. R. Cheney, Professor of Medieval History, surveys with critical eloquence “one aspect of the present activities of medieval historians in England as a whole: the zeal for investigating archives.” The increased resources of the medievalist, the material that makes him wary of the broad generalizations dear to his predecessors, have prompted this plea for scientific treatment of documents, and a consideration of some of the implications of ‘record-mindedness.’ “We have to guard against an inordinate and exclusive respect for records contrasted with other historical material, and to suppress the notion that records are the one key to knowledge of the Middle Ages . . . The danger is not that records will be used too much but that uncritical reliance will be put upon them because of the charm of the ‘authentic.’” The value of Professor Cheney's recommendations will be apparent even to the non-historian.

Saga and Myth in Ancient Ireland is a delightful and eminently lucid account of the medieval Irish manuscripts and their relation to oral narration, the nature and contents of the mythological tales—preserving in more primitive form Celtic themes—and the King cycle; and concluding with a brief survey of the twelfth-century enrichment of Irish literature by versions of classical stories. Mr. Gerard Murphy has written a most able introduction to a fascinating subject.

KING LEAR: WARNING OR PROPHECY? By Abraham Schechter. Privately printed at the Press of Theo. Gaus' Sons, New York. \$1.00.

“Lear is all father, ‘every inch a king’, he is the father-figure, he is God. . . . You ask, if he is God, whose God is he? Our God, I answer, for we live in a somewhat mad world, my masters and God having given Himself into our hands (so to speak), Lear is become our God.”

“I want to prove, and I think I will prove, most circumferentially, from point-to-point, very quod-erat-demonstrandumly that Shakespeare was the

even more important, much more—for today for us is the burden of Shakespeare's prophecy."

The above quotations from Mr. Schechter's pamphlet will serve to show his 'hermeneutical' approach to *King Lear*. He states also that "when you have been acute enough to see a difficulty, you have found a divinely-placed pointer towards a peephole into the secrets of Paradise". Rather unhappily, one has to admit that while the obscurities of this disjointed essay are apparent, where they lead is also something of a mystery.

A HISTORY OF RUSSIAN MUSIC. By Richard Anthony Leonard. Jarrolds. 30s.

The richness and variety and alien elements in Russian music have left the ordinary music-lover in much the position of the reader who can claim some knowledge of one or two epochs in Russian literature and some familiarity with the work of pre-eminent figures—but little more. Mr. Leonard's book is certain of wide attention, for it illuminates the whole background, traces the general, developing patterns, and provides excellent individual studies of notable composers.

"There have been not one but two great ages in Russian music. The first began with the introduction of Christianity to Russia late in the tenth century, and the bringing of the Byzantine chant of the Eastern Church into the pagan land. With centuries of use the Byzantine chant became slowly Russianized, developing and flourishing all through the Middle Ages into a richly ornamented liturgical art. . . . The second age did not begin until centuries later, after the secular music of Western Europe at last seeped into Russia through the medium of the theatre—the drama of the West and Italian opera. . . . There is a significant point to be made at the outset about both these epochs in Russian music. Both had a common origin—the impact upon the Russians of a foreign culture. . . . From any close study of Russian music, whether ancient or modern, two facts invariably spring forth. The most obvious is that the Russian is so strong a nationalist that when he seizes upon a foreign art which appeals to him he usually changes it into something which then seems to belong to him. The second is that, in spite of his strong nationalism, he is also by nature an eclectic. . . ."

So Mr. Leonard introduces his subject, which is broadly divided into sections on early Church music; the music in the style of Italian opera, so fiercely attacked by the Church but encouraged by Peter the Great and, even more, by the Empresses Anne, Elizabeth and Catherine; composers from Glinka to Tchaikovsky, Scriabin to Stravinsky, and those of Soviet Russia. Their work and the effect on it of nationalism and eclecticism is his main concern, and though no technical terms are used, his musical scholarship and fine taste are everywhere apparent; but in addition, each assessment notes the many factors that have marred or encouraged full achievement. Frustrations and difficulties are particularly stressed in the account of the Soviet composers. Shostakovich, for example, is summed up as

"by nature a theatre composer, a dramatic illustrator. Like one who excels at writing incidental music his technical skills are great, his adaptability

even greater; he can produce effective passages in a dozen different styles; he can score a film or work up a gargantuan political symphony; he can write a beautiful string quartet; he can simulate the more obvious moods as easily as putting on so many masks, from romantic pathos to ribald clowning. He is, in short, an artist of superb natural talents. He is also a weather vane, shifting obligingly with the winds of either political or musical ideology."

The concluding sentence is not, in the context, harsh, for Shostakovich's immaturity is shown as in part the result of the privation, sickness and dreadful misery of his early years, his compliance always aware of the fate of men like Vsevolod Meyerhold, whose protest against government policy was immediately followed by his arrest and complete disappearance, and the murder of his wife.

Mr. Leonard has written a book so full and perceptive, so masterly in its treatment that to overpraise it would be difficult.

HUGH LANE AND HIS PICTURES. By Thomas Bodkin. Published by the Stationery Office for An Chomhairle Ealaíon (The Arts Council). Dublin. 15s.

The first edition of Professor Thomas Bodkin's book was published privately by the Government of Saorstát Éireann in 1932, chiefly for presentation to various libraries and art institutions. The second edition, which appeared to meet a large public demand, has long been out of print; and in this new edition, with its fifty-one plates, the eleven chapters of the original work have been left unaltered, but an epilogue has been added. In it,

"I set out all important relevant statements which have been made by a variety of people, some well-informed, others quite the contrary, since the book first appeared. I have also carefully revised the *catalogue raisonné* of the thirty-nine Continental pictures which Lane destined for Dublin, in the light of some interesting critical and historical material which has appeared in the interval."

Hugh Lane and His Pictures, as an account of a life and personality, is in itself a work of art. Professor Bodkin's intimacy with Lane and his circle and happy collaboration in the plans to provide Dublin with a worthy Municipal Gallery of Modern Art, and in the arrangement of various exhibitions, give authority to these pages; and the unerring taste and perception brought to this fine portrait of an unusual man, the wit and charm of the background descriptions, make a delightful study.

The history of the controversy over the pictures is painful reading for Irishmen, and for all those who would like to think that England has more regard for moral right than legal quibble; but it can be justly claimed that every pertinent fact has been set down here without malice. He says of Lady Gregory's tireless efforts to have the pictures returned: "No doubt when they come back to Dublin, her countrymen will realise that they have returned mainly because of her devotion to Lane and to Ireland". The reader of this book may well consider that its able presentation of the case and its eloquent, restrained appeal link Professor Bodkin's name with hers.

THE APPROACH TO SELF-GOVERNMENT. By Sir Ivor Jennings. Cambridge University Press. 16s.

LAWS AND FLAWS (Lapses of the Legislators). By Edward F. Iwi. Odhams Press. 21s.

"If every problem is regarded as a practical problem, we constitutional lawyers can produce a practical solution. Sometimes in moments of exasperation, one realises how easy political problems would become if there were no 'politicians'". This quotation is from the short volume of about 200 pages, in which Sir Ivor Jennings contrives to discuss many of the major problems of the process of transition from colonial to self-governing status. Each problem is discussed as a practical one and the clarity of style enables any intelligent reader to understand and appreciate the formidable obstacles which have been overcome in the past, and have to be faced in the future, in the approach to self-government, and in framing a constitution for a new country about to govern itself. The book was originally a series of broadcasts and this, together with its clarity of style, saves it from the ponderousness which is usually associated with books of this nature and renders it a suitable addition to the library not only of the lawyer, statesman and student, but also to that of the well-informed citizen.

The study of constitutional problems has been Mr. Iwi's hobby certainly since 1940, when he sought complete distraction from immediate happenings in reflecting on, and finding a flaw in, the procedure governing the recall of the British Parliament during recess. The immediate happenings were his carrying out of his duties as a fireman (the realization of an ambition of his youth) on a part-time basis during a heavy air raid on Golders Green "when bombs were dropping very near home". The contents of this volume are the outcome of this unusual hobby which unearthed a considerable number of interesting flaws in the laws of England. Many problems about the modern state and the rights and liberties of the subject are also explored by Mr. Iwi who is, of course, a very well-known authority on such matters. While the volume has perhaps a special appeal to the lawyer, it should appeal to, and provide entertainment for, a much wider public. One need not be a lawyer to appreciate the humour of the flaw in the Regency Act, 1937, under which, in the event of the Duke of Cornwall succeeding to the throne under the age of 18 and marrying under that age a bride who was over 21, then his wife was to be his guardian and his aunt, Princess Margaret, was to be his Regent. This was to be the position even if his father was still alive.

T. D. M. B.

MATRON OF GUY'S. Emily E. P. MacManus, C.B.E., with a foreword by L. A. G. Strong. London: Andrew Melrose. 25s. net.

Florence Nightingale never married but she has left synthetic descendants behind her. To name a few, Miss Haughton, a Guy's nurse who became a renowned Matron of Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital and later was called to London to act as Matron of her own hospital, Miss MacManus, the author of this book and last, but not least, Miss Ramsden, a St. Thomas' Hospital nurse who was the outstanding matron of the Rotunda Hospital for several decades. Through the years, nurses have undergone hard training. Bullying by severe sisters was the vogue but to-day nurses are treated as human beings and patients benefit. Not

only does greater skill prevail but this skill is combined with, as the author remarks, "cherishing, serving and caring". Nursing is a gilt-edged profession and its members even now do not get enough credit or emolument.

Miss MacManus is the daughter of a hard-working general practitioner, who was trained in Dr. Steevens' Hospital and played Rugby for the Wanderers Football Club. She is related to many famous Irish people, including the late Sir Walter Boyd. She always had a strong feeling for the profession. She describes her training and how she advanced step by step until she became Matron of Guy's Hospital after she had served as Matron of the Bristol Royal Infirmary. Her story is a saga. She travelled widely, she served on multitudinous committees and all this experience helped her to achieve what she wanted, especially improvement in conditions for nurses and in the nursing profession in general. She shared in the important legislation which made registration of nurses compulsory and marked the death of Mrs. Gamp; this occurred in 1919. Encouragement was given to nurses not to be one-sided, but to take interest in the Arts and the Humanities. There are plenty of amusing anecdotes; one nurse was asked what she would do for stillbirth and answered, "Bury the baby". And now Miss MacManus lives in her cottage in Mayo where she can indulge to the full her love of fishing and no one deserves a happy retirement more. She has given happiness and helped to health thousands of people and although she has nominally retired, we are fully aware that she is not abstaining from philanthropic work.

Illustrations pervade the book, which will be enjoyed by medical and non-medical readers.

B. S.

JOSEPH LISTER. By Kenneth Walker. London: Hutchinson. 10s. 6d. net.

Kenneth Walker has made many valuable contributions to medical literature; his "Story of Medicine" might well be called a modern classic. His fame as a genito-urinary specialist is international. Rickman Godlee has written an exhaustive work about the beloved Lister, who as a pioneer in antisepsis probably stimulated Pasteur and others in their successful experiments which culminated in demonstrating that asepsis is the important factor in surgery. Semmelweis and Metchnikoff were working on similar lines in other countries. Lister was born a Quaker but left the fold when he married the daughter of his illustrious teacher, Syme. He was Professor of Surgery successively in Glasgow, Edinburgh and in London and such an achievement must be unique. One of his most important investigations was on suture material, especially the sterilisation of catgut with a view especially to obliterate the danger of tetanus.

He had a happy married life for 37 years, but alas there were no children. This little book might be called a readers' digest about Lister and for those who desire to know about him and who do not want to consult the larger works, it can be recommended. Even though small it would be improved by the inclusion of an index.

B. S.

DETERMINED TO LIVE. By Brian Hession. London: Peter Davies. 15s. net.

Brian Hession is a clergyman, the son of a Roman Catholic father and a Protestant mother. His photographs show him to be an extremely happy-looking man without a care in the world. His is a brave story, telling of his very radical

operation for cancer of the intestine, when he was told the prognosis for life was bad. He was determined to live and to-day, two years after the operation, he is in full work. He devotes a great deal of his energy to an organisation which supplies films and strips for use by Christian leaders of any denomination. He is also interested in "Cancer anonymous", a Society similar to "Alcohol anonymous". Faith is not confined to the Christian or any other religion. When ill, the patient must put his trust in the God he worships, whether he be Christian, Jew or Buddhist; he also must have faith in his doctor and last, but not least, in himself; in fact, like Hession, he must have courage. Perhaps too much emphasis is laid on details about malignant disease. The most valuable point stressed by the author is that cancer is curable if diagnosed early and the public must be educated to seek medical advice before the advent of untoward symptoms. The devotion of the nursing profession is emphasised. Hession is no hidebound parson; he went skiing soon after his operation and he does not mind talking of conversations he had "over a few drinks".

Let us hope that he, with his wife and two children, will be happy for many years to come; he is an outstanding example of the value of modern surgery.

B. S.

I SOMETIMES THINK. By Lennox Robinson. The Talbot Press. 9s. 6d.

The short essays by Mr. Lennox Robinson that appeared in the *Irish Press* during recent years, under the title of *I Sometimes Think*, have been grouped here under the headings: The Theatre, Places, People, Et Cetera.

Mr. Robinson seems to have accepted the necessary limitations with something of a miniaturist's pleasure. Another Elia, he records, with an air of intimacy, his fancies, his opinions of books, his enjoyment of excursions here and there in Ireland; and, as George Moore, Synge, Horace Plunkett, Wilde, Yeats and Lady Gregory appear briefly in these pages, one thinks how just the praise of a modest and sensitive man can be. When he writes of plays and the problems and triumphs of the playwright and producer, however, the reader is tantalized: these pages, with their mellow authority and suggestiveness, are far too few to satisfy the theatre-lover.

THREE EPISODES IN THE LIFE OF KAISER WILHELM II. The Leslie Stephen Lecture, 1955. By J. W. Wheeler-Bennett. Cambridge University Press. 3s. 6d.

Mr. J. W. Wheeler-Bennett devoted the Leslie Stephen Lecture, delivered in the University of Cambridge in November, 1955, to glimpses of Kaiser Wilhelm II in his youth, at the time of his abdication, and immediately before the outbreak of the Second World War that help to explain "the man who dominated the political stage of Europe for thirty years".

The account of Wilhelm's early life shows how much his upbringing was responsible for his worst faults, and a heavy share of the blame is laid here on his mother. Her letters, however, stress the deep pain and resentment she felt when tradition and the open dislike for her of Bismarck and the Court deprived her of intimate contact with her son. The courageous, gifted, but morbidly sensitive and unstable Prince; the Emperor when his Divine Rights had been rudely torn from his tenacious grasp; the bland, almost Edwardian figure at Doorn, who

talked to Mr. Wheeler-Bennett "with fluency, animation and wit, displaying a remarkable clarity of mind, and an amazing accuracy for dates, but not always such an outstanding respect for facts": these aspects of his personality are carefully analysed, and the final portrait of him emerges as "a small man who, with the confidence of Phaeton, had undertaken a task that was far too great for him. On a lesser stage such a tragedy might have passed unnoticed; but on the great stage of world politics he remains a tragic example of a man whose many creditable qualities were betrayed by his own defects".

TALES OF GRACE AND FAVOUR. By Doris Leslie. Hutchinson. 21s.

This omnibus edition contains three of Miss Doris Leslie's historical romances. *Folly's End* has for background the England of the Civil War, the Commonwealth and Restoration, and in it Prudence, daughter of the Cavalier Lord Folliott, tells of her childhood; her marriage, at the age of fourteen, to one of her two boy companions, Piers, and her love for the other, the Catholic Peverill; and of her husband's death in attempting to save the latter from the sheriff's men when, after accusing him of treason, he discovers that his jealous suspicions have been unfounded. *The Peverills* is about one of Prudence's descendants, a lively girl, whose experiences in Paris during the French Revolution imperil her life before she escapes to England with the man she loves. *Another Cynthia* concerns an equally spirited and lovely Regency adventuress who finally, and in curious circumstances, becomes the wife of Sir Richard Ffulkes, who played a part in the Luddite riots.

These stories, highly praised when they first appeared, are excellent light reading for Miss Leslie brings to them careful research, a delight in each period, and an outstanding gift for conveying atmosphere.

PERIDOT FLIGHT. By Doris Leslie. Hutchinson, 1956: 16s.

This novel, reconstructed from the memoirs of Peridot, Lady Mulvarnie (1872—1955), is a masterpiece calculated to afford the greatest pleasure. It is notoriously difficult to treat, in a vivid and effective manner, the character of a good person. But *Peridot Flight* is charming, shrewd, bold and freedom-loving whilst remaining simple and virtuous. We admire her quick wits as she learns from the aristocracy. One must never say: 'Pleased to meet you'. One must always say 'different from', and never 'different to', whatever the authors of *The King's English* may think!

Doris Leslie tells a story with grace, charm and wit in the treatment; and sureness of touch in the considerable research and technique required for 'fictionizing' the documents at her disposal.

M. C.

GALA PERFORMANCE. Edited by Arnold Haskell, Mark Bonham Carter and Michael Wood. Collins. 42s. net.

This is a record of twenty-five years of the Sadlers Wells Ballet. We have already had two admirable ballet books by Baron from the same publisher, and are promised a third. Meanwhile this record of a great ballet company has appeared and will delight all balletomanes. Sacheverell Sitwell contributes a nostalgic prologue full of evocations of the glorious past; the design of the book and its

choice of illustrations are excellent, and its editors again and again have departed from the beaten track and reproduced photographs and designs which have hitherto eluded the publisher. And in a forty-page appendix we get, beautifully printed, the full tale of the company's first productions and revivals. If it were merely a reference book it would be invaluable, but actually it is a discursive and delightful gift-book destined to please many who may have no curiosity whatever about dates or names. As well as its one hundred and seventy-seven pages of photographs there are seven colour plates illustrating décors by Piper, Messel, Osbert Lancaster and others.

M. C.

BEERBOHM TREE, HIS LIFE AND LAUGHTER. By Hesketh Pearson. London: Methuen and Co., Ltd. 25s. net.

We find it difficult to believe that this is the first biography of that great man of the theatre, Herbert Beerbohm Tree, and it has been well worth waiting for. Tree, like two of his famous contemporaries, Lewis Waller and George Alexander, started life as a clerk in a commercial office. Considering the fact that apart from tours in many parts of the world, Tree produced in London nearly 100 plays of infinite variety between 1887 and 1917, it is amazing to find that his first big success was in the title part of *The Private Secretary*, which he soon relinquished and was succeeded by W. S. Penley. He may be regarded as the Father of the Repertory Movement, which is still the best training ground for actors. When Alec Guinness appeared as a bearded Hamlet a few years ago, he was subjected to criticism, but Tree had preceded him with this innovation. Pearson has an outstanding faculty for painting word pictures of his characters and this is no exception. He reminds us of the dramatic poet, Stephen Phillips, whose *Paola and Francesca*, produced by Tree, will not be forgotten by those of us who were fortunate enough to witness it. Tree was over-generous and charitable and had a conversational wit comparable with Wilde. He was very anxious to have a National Theatre, but there were misunderstandings between him and Granville Barker and the scheme never reached fruition. In view of the possibility in this country, his suggestion that the management board should consist of actors and not theorists should be borne in mind. One of the most important things he did for the theatre was the establishment of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in 1904.

Life and Laughter is the sub-title of this book, which is rich in theatre lore and delightful anecdotes. There are many photographs, a List of References and an Index. May we suggest an excellent subject for one of our Debating Societies? "How does the theatre of the past 30 years compare with the 30 years of Tree?" Among Tree's contemporaries were Irving, Forbes Robertson, Oscar Asche, Ellen Terry, Mrs. Kendall. How would they compare with the great ones of to-day as represented by John Gielgud, Olivier, Richardson, Peggy Ashcroft, Edith Evans and Flora Robeson?

A fascinating study!

B. S.

THE REBEL. By François Clément: translated by Mervyn Savill. Hurst and Blackett, 1956: 12s. 6d.

One feels that—like the old Elizabethan writers—all French authors are stylists born. Certainly there is in this modern romance of *The Rebel*, no sign of

fumbling on the part of Monsieur François Clément. We have a story deftly told, possessing colour and romance and yet essentially modern in its significance. The 'disobedient son' (as the French title has it) represents the revolt of the human spirit against base exploitation and an ignoble existence. Yet the rebel against society, if he resorts to violence, must fail in one sense or another. Juanito comes by way of revolt to that 'power' which induces pride, and has to be abused to be maintained. He dies—this courteous Indian peasant—like an aristocrat under the guillotine : *il ya une manière* : but what of the cause of freedom ?

Mervyn Savill's translation is excellent.

M. C.

BEDLAM. By André Soubiran. Translated by Oliver Coburn from the French novel *L'Ile aux Fous*. London: W. H. Allen. 1956.

It is nearly impossible to believe that in 1956, such dreadful atrocities, as portrayed by the Author, could occur in any mental hospital of the modern world. *Bedlam* is the title of the book and it reminds us of the paintings of Hogarth, which did so much to improve conditions for the mentally ill. The story is told largely through the medium of a prisoner, for he cannot be called a patient, who should certainly have been freed, but the doctor author fails to reveal if he ultimately gets out of the clutches of the sadistic superintendent and the warders trained to cruelty. There are numerous pen pictures of patients which are not suitable for squeamish readers. Out of the darkness comes light, and the new superintendent shocks the staff by bringing in modern methods. We believe that the publication of this work, if brought to the notice of the French Medical Association, must stop these horrible practices. There are no lunatic asylums in Great Britain or Ireland; there are hospitals for the mentally sick, where patients are treated and in many cases cured, where music and cinema shows are provided and where cruelty such as is shown in this book is a thing of the distant past.

B. S.

IRISH CRAFTSMANSHIP. Text and Drawings by S. Mac Cana. Caps Publicity, Dublin.

THOMAS BEWICK, Wood Engraver. Newcastle Upon Tyne, 1753-1828. The Signet Press, Greenock. 2s. 6d.

Irish Craftsmanship, a booklet which first appeared as a series of advertisements for the Irish Hospitals Trust during 1947, has now been expanded. Soirle M. Mac Cana's survey of arts and crafts in Ireland from the Early Bronze Age to the present century is an excellent little essay. Only considerable research and appreciation could, in these few pages, have presented so lucid and balanced a tribute to the wealth of achievement; and the illustrations have been designed with equal discrimination.

The text of the monograph on Thomas Bewick has been taken from a work on engraving by John Jackson, published in 1839. Bewick's most notable work, the cuts in his *The History of Quadrupeds* and *History of British Birds*, received early recognition; and this illustrated account of his life and his originality as a wood-engraver is most agreeably produced.

A LOST PARADISE. By Samuel Chotzinoff. London: Hamish Hamilton. 21s. net.

From a very humble beginning as the son of a poor minor Jewish Rabbi, Chotzinoff tells his story.

The first half of the book will appeal especially to Jewish readers; Jewish customs in regard to religious services, diet and other minutiae are described. The author was born in Russia and the family decided to emigrate to the United States, but a blackguardly travel agent supplied them with tickets to London where they found themselves stranded. There is a most amusing description of the way they managed to get to America. When he was ten years old his love of music started but he did not get much opportunity for practising the piano as he had continually to take on minor menial jobs to help the family budget. "I had been brought up to believe that Christians had no feelings." Such a remark is unadulterated rubbish. Jews have the greatest respect for Christians. He was so inundated with religion that he became sceptical. He started to read and enjoy the New Testament but his final attitude to religious matters is not given; this would have made interesting reading and is an important omission. The fortunes of the different members of his family are described. He is lucky when he meets Plesch who gives him his first real training in music. The dust jacket tells how he became accompanist to Heifetz whose sister he married, but the book itself ends with his debut as a pianist. This autobiography would have made better reading if there had been less attention paid to Jewish ritual and more to the life of the author. The ending is so abrupt that perhaps another volume is contemplated.

SPECTRUM: A SPECTATOR MISCELLANY. Editors: Ian Gilmore and Iain Hamilton. Longmans. 16s.

The editors did not aim to produce a true scale model of the *Spectator*, but rather to rescue from the file what they hoped would be an entertaining miscellany of articles and features. The impressive list of well-known contributors guarantees erudite and thought-provoking articles on politics, economics, literature and the arts as well as contributions in lighter vein. Regarding the latter, some of them can hardly be intended to amuse the regular *Spectator* reader of the generations before "the renaissance of the journal". I quote:

"Three Cheers

The ONLY NEWSPAPER left on the stand of one newsagent last week was the *Marylebone Mercury*. Across its front page ran the headlines: 'Flats given to sweetie-pies: not for the first time, councillor says.' Life goes on"

Life goes on, indeed.

T. D. M. B.

PETER PERRY. By Michael Campbell. London: William Heinemann. 13s. 6d. net.

We know Michael Campbell better as a journalist rather than as a novelist and, we feel that journalism is more his *métier* than novel writing, but this is a first attempt and he will improve with experience. It is an endeavour to portray an aspect of Bohemian life in Dublin and some of the descriptions remind us of a

saying of Negley Farson:—"listening to the twitterings of sparrow intellectuals". The heroine, Peter Perry is the aunt of Roy who is telling the tale; she is a curious gaunt mixture and the picture on the dust jacket reminds us of a well-known figure in the city. In her youth she was "the tall young beauty beloved by poets", and in her old age—"an unbelievable hag as high as a steeple". There is a plot interspersed about a vanished husband.

Campbell has a knack of portraying people and places, but he must not try to emulate Joyce. Dubliners will get pleasure journeying through some of the South side of Dublin with the author.

THE NEW HEADMASTER. By Alan Ker. London: Chapman and Hall. 10s. 6d. net.

This book consists chiefly of a "conversation piece" between the staff of a school where a new Head has been appointed. The new man will not allow corporal punishment and the main issue is involved in the following sequence. A boy who is a good cricketer is punished for not knowing his Latin by being prevented from playing in an important match; in spite of this veto he played; in consequence, a junior master caned him against orders; the master was dismissed and the boy approved of his punishment. The whole matter was brought before the Board of Governors who decided that the Headmaster must go. He resigned and became an Inspector of schools. The characters of the governors, masters and some of the boys are well drawn. As a school book it cannot vie with Henty.

THE HILL CALLED GRAZING. The Story of a Transvaal Farm. By A. G. McRae. Max Parrish. 10s. 6d.

When Mr. McRae and his wife bought their farm on the Transvaal *veld* they had few illusions. The land had been badly neglected, the stock was poor, the house a one-roomed wood and iron shack, the equipment almost non-existent; yet "the combination of twenty acres of barren but beautiful hillside, the gentle whispering of the giant pines on the lower slopes, the knowing chuckle of the little stream, and then the good, rich earth underfoot" bade them throw caution to the winds.

The story of their struggle to turn *La Grazie*, as they did, into a well-tended and modestly successful farm, of their neighbours, native help and animals, is most engaging. They would laugh when their money was almost gone—for they were blessed with the ability to distinguish between poverty and impecuniosity—and turn to sign-painting and the hawking of their fruit from door to door. They did not wait for government aid but began themselves, assisted by one mule, the heavy task of conserving the soil and building a dam. They were compassionate but unsentimental to waifs of every sort: natives, a small boy, animals.

The last chapter tells of a hail-storm that laid waste their crops and left them with little—they had seven shillings and sixpence in their pockets—but the calm refusal to surrender. This is a most vividly-written book; and its gaiety astonishes the reader accustomed to the diligent cultivation of *angst* and self-pity.

FACTOR T. By Stefan Themerson. 6s.

DAY OFF. By Patrick Fetherston. 3s.

THE SONG OF BRIGHT MISERY. By Pol-Dives. Translated from the French by Barbara Wright. With a Preface by Stefan Themerson. 6s. Gaberbocchus Black Series. Gaberbocchus Press.

THE TWO BROTHERS OF DIFFERENT SEX. A Story from the Chinese. Illustrated by Edy Legrand.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST. By Charles Lamb. Miniature Books. The Rodale Press. 6s. each.

Among the latest of the Gaberbocchus Black Series is a penetrating, subtle essay by Mr. Stefan Themerson, in which he examines some rational and religious attitudes, and gently but firmly detaches us from our feather-bed of beliefs. *Factor T* considers, in particular, the "tragic discrepancy between our dislike of killing and the necessity of doing so", and it is most salutary reading. Mr. Themerson has also written an interesting account of Pol-Dives as Preface to the latter's poem. He describes the experiments with a magic lantern in a poor, wooden shed behind a Paris shop in 1938 and the vitraumaginary poems that expressed fully the world of Pol-Dives's mind. *The Song of Bright Misery* treats of La Misère Claire and La Misère Noire in the terms of a contemporary and disillusioned St. Francis; and this first edition, based on the unpublished, illuminated manuscript has illustrations that recall some of Dürer's work. In *Day Off*, a fantasy about a young man called Damson who works in a Social Salvage Office, Mr. Patrick Fetherston has written a neat surrealist tale with satirical intent. It is curious that while the young intellectual enjoys this sort of game so much, to those of us who are less advanced in our tastes such satire is a little puling, and the Freudian decorations a trifle threadbare.

The Rodale Press has now given us the metrical version of *Beauty and the Beast*, with the original coloured engravings, which Charles Lamb wrote—obviously with pleasure—when Wordsworth refused to undertake the task for M. J. Godwin; and a charming little story from the Chinese that characteristically dwells on the rewards of filial piety. Collectors of the fastidiously chosen and produced Miniature Books will welcome these delightful additions.

MABEL DIGBY. By M. K. Richardson. Longmans. 16s. 6d.

Mother Richardson of the Society of the Sacred Heart has written the life of a former Superior-General, Mother Digby, in a style that will give great pleasure to the readers for whom the book is intended.

Mabel Digby was born in 1835. When during a family visit to France, her mother and two of her sisters became Roman Catholics, she shared her father's anger at their conversion. During a return visit to Montpellier however, a vision and the plotting of her Roman Catholic friends—described a little uncomfortably by Mother Richardson—overcame the girl's resistance. Soon afterwards she entered the Order and justly became one of its most revered members for she had great charm and courage, was an able superior, and a singularly devout nun.

If, though this account of community life and educational work is as complete and balanced as it is vivid, the non-Roman Catholic reader must be dismayed

at the deliberate encouragement in the young of purely emotional judgments. And the good nuns, determined to be gay, submissive, tormented, wholly dedicated, and convinced that God,—as Mother Digby assured them—liked to see them suffer, seemed quite unable to distinguish what was childish, obsessional and even pathological from what was noble in their beliefs and aspirations.

THE PRESENCE OF GRACE. By J. F. Powers. Gollancz, 1956. 13/6.

The newcomer to these short stories by J. F. Powers may at first be a little puzzled. Why are they so compelling? Why, having read a couple, does a reader wish to learn all he can about the author and his work? The literary power, the urbane irony, the *technique* are obvious: but there is a great deal more than that: there is something this epoch desperately needs, and we may call it integrity.

One has often thought that if our economists became theologians and our theologians became economists then social values (rather than fraudulent measurement) might happily result. Mr. Powers' quiet, humorous, moving studies make us re-examine a lot of the dirt we acquiesce in, and say to ourselves: 'There, but for the presence of grace. . .'

M. C.

CASUALTY. By Robert Romanis. London: Andre Deutsch. 13/6 net.

This consists of the notes of a casualty officer in a large London hospital, with reports of cases, some of them frightening, a few of them amusing. He gets one week-end away with his wife when she begs him to let her have a baby; we are left in the dark as to the outcome of the discussion. We feel that Dr. Romanis could write a good book; his first may have been, but we have not read it. He will be a humane and efficient doctor, but we hope he will not give too many details of his cases in Becket's Hospital to his future patients; if he does, some of them will become hypochondriacs.

MOONLIGHT, STARLIGHT. By Bellamy Brown. John Long. 10s. 6d.

THE NEWCOMER. By John Sykes. Hurst and Blackett. 11s. 6d.

GETAWAY. By John Harris. Hurst and Blackett. 12s. 6d.

In *Moonlight, Starlight* a London typist helps a friend, thanks to a cheque for advance of royalties on her first novel, but her generosity is the cause of a fatal accident. Horrified, she breaks away from her associations and surroundings. Almost penniless, but urged by memories of the West Country, she sets off to seek adventure among people who are sympathetic and helpful, but somewhat commonplace. She falls in love with a married man and takes on the "mothering" of his imbecile boy. It is a situation which, naturally, starts a train of incidents in which Alison Raine displays most of the feminine emotions.

In *The Newcomer* "Vickey" Hurlingham runs through the gamut of emotions; so does the son of an African chief—plus some fetish and hoodoo. The retired diplomat is not so convincing a character as are the Mexican and the Buddha-worshipping Indian. A chauvinistic barrister from Lagos in a luxury flat is giving a wealthy widow "the adventure of her life". White girl, black man!

The colour bar, as the author draws it here, is a pliable one ; and, although it is not conducive to the softening of antipathies, the book is interesting as a study of people who try to waive their inherent prejudices. A sentimental tradesman is a typical figure in the mixum-gatherum of residents in a London boarding-house where racial hatred leads to an uproarious fight in which the better man is knocked out by a clout with the housekeeper's rolling-pin.

OUT OF THE GUN. By Denis Warner. Hutchinson. 18s.

*"Every communist must grasp the truth:
Political power grows out of the barrel of
the gun . . ."* (Mao Tse-tung)

The quotation is the introduction to this intense book which is written with the author's ten years of experience as Eastern Correspondent for the *Daily Telegraph*, and evidently with a longer period of close study of the national and political influences which ruled the fighting there, and, more important to his theme, those which stopped it in the various areas. Often in the forward lines, and constantly in close contact with Command and Administration, Mr. Warner had unique opportunities of learning why and how things were done in the Pacific Islands, Korea, Indo-China and Malaya. This work rates highly amongst the most authoritative of war books, the more so because it explains many fundamental mistakes, points the present instability throughout the Far East, and stresses the warning that it is intended that calamity for the West shall come "Out of the Gun", the declared method by which the kernel of the widespread communist organizations hope to force their 'peace' upon the World. The text is amplified by 26 finely reproduced photographs, and end-paper maps.

THE STARS WEEP. By Bernard Lelong and Jean-Luc Javal. Hutchinson. 18s.

Published in France under the title *Cordillère Magique*, and translated here by Geoffrey Sainsbury, this is a personal account of a 'two-men' expedition which was sponsored by the (French) National Centre of Scientific Research. There are 36 reproductions of photographs taken by the authors. The undertaking was primarily ethnological, to re-discover the Aymaras and Quechuas and to study their social organizations, which have endured since time unknown. Here, unencumbered with scientific detail, is an extremely interesting account of the adventure, of halting and inquisitive wanderings and journeys across the plains and plateaus of South America, and over the Andes (in an air-plane) to the Beni river and other tributaries of the Amazon; and we learn much that is amusing, as well as astonishing, about the customs and characteristics of strange and friendly people. The authors have done excellent work, both in research and writing. In a work which covers so vast an expanse of country, end-paper maps would be welcome; it is diverting to have to keep on reaching for the atlas!

DANGEROUS HAVEN. By Arthur Nash. Hurst & Blackett 12s. 6d.

A HAUNTED LAND. By Randolph Stow. Macdonald. 13s. 6d.

BRIDAL SUITE. By Joan Butler. Stanley Paul. 10s. 6d.

Dangerous Haven is a period novel which rises in *tempo* to a retributive melodramatic ending. The period is that of Dickens, when steam was displacing sail and stage coaches were disappearing from the roads. A naval officer, having an abhorrence of living in a 'floating kettle', retires from the Service with the

intention of becoming an author, and tumbles into a sea of troubles. His first meeting with his favourite poet (a super cynic) and his wife, Helen, is the beginning of the traditional triangle, the anticipated outcome of which is made unattainable by a simple accident—Helen misplaces a bottle. At a safe distance there is a virtuous maiden, a pathetic person, kept on very short Victorian leading-strings by a likeable, philosophic lawyer. Around the major episodes Mr. Nash has written an appreciative story which, if his Prelude were set in its appropriate context, and read as the opening of Part 3, runs smoothly from beginning to end.

A Haunted Land, a Western Australian novel, is not constructed to run smoothly and uninterruptedly: the author makes effective use of the hiatus method, in which there is no 'filling' to be skipped as the reader follows the fortunes and misfortunes of the Maguires of Malin, a family of Irish extraction who are farming a bush station. Edward Maguire is a hereditary squatter, tough and callous, always unpredictable, often morose and sometimes drunk. He is loved by his sons and daughters, in each of whom he sees some individual trait or likeness of his wife whose death he mourns to the point of obsession. If one of them were the exact replica of their dead mother, Edward might be happy; as it is, his moods and his belief that love is hatred, make life uncomfortable for all at Malin. These bearded boys and educated girls have individual accomplishments which must have been unusual in the Outback of fifty years ago. Opportunities for neighbourly intercourse are rare, and there are 'casualties', one of which is rather horrifying but understandable in the circumstance. Mr. Stow is at his best in depicting the outdoor life, the alternating seasons and the flora and fauna in a wild country which is being tamed.

Bridal Suite is a frolic of fun over which prudes may raise eyebrows; others, those who appreciate witty dialogue in a skilfully woven mystery story, may have to suppress laughter. In satirizing film production, Joan Butler, whether or not with intent, introduces her amusing characters in the traditional environment of Maturin's and Radcliffe's Gothic thrillers; but instead of a Melmoth in a medieval mansion we have a Hollywood tycoon with a retinue of executives and the caste for a forthcoming masterpiece, which is to be produced 'on location'. As Rudolph Montague is a stickler for validity, 'shooting' can not be begun until the three-hundred-years old mystery has been solved by an American detective who makes pseudo-psycho experiments and uses modern methods of crime detection. There are the glamorous Star (whose contract does not bind her to wear a Queen Anne nightdress whilst reclining in a spider-festooned bed), mischievous child actors, and a company of supporters who help in the antics. Occasionally they seem to be getting near to the knuckles; but, by adroit evasion, they never get rapped.

ADAM. International Review. Edited by Miron Grindea. 250th Anniversary Number, 1955. 5s.

This anniversary number of *Adam*, devoted to Emile Verhaeren, is a very fine tribute to the great Belgian poet. The distinguished contributors—among them MM. Georges Duhamel, Paul Fort, Raymond Queneau and Mr. John Redwood-Anderson—have discussed different aspects of his work or written most

feliciously of their friendship with the man whose gentle charm, generosity and simplicity made him so approachable. These essays and a discussion by MM. Jean Cocteau and André Maurois of "La Poésie sous la Coupole" make a memorable issue.

CHILDREN'S BOOKS

THE PARADISE PULLMAN. By Andrew Wood. Max Parrish & Co., Ltd. 9/6.

THE PATCHWORK QUILT. By Barbara Sleigh. Max Parrish & Co., Ltd. 9/6.

THE STRANGE STORY OF PIPPIN WOOD. By Irene Byers. Max Parrish & Co., Ltd. 9/6.

WHIZZ FOR ATOMS. By Godfrey Williams & Ronald Searle. Max Parrish & Co., Ltd. 9/6.

Paradise Pullman is an exciting story of trains for all those boys who still nurture a secret wish to be engine drivers in this jet-minded age. Apart from the thrill of the great racing locomotives of the prenationalisation days, there is a swindler, a gang of Victorian thugs, an early flying display, a circus and a dash to Euston by special train. The two boys, Tony and his friend Bogie spend much of their exciting lives on the foot-plates of giants called Onyx or Lord Richard and are sure to be the envy of all the more remote train spotters of to-day.

The Patchwork Quilt is a mystery story that will appeal more to girls, though two boys literally help to unravel it, for the clues are stitched into this family heirloom. The story is well told by the eldest girl, with a warm background of domestic adventure. All turns out happily in the end, except possibly for poor mother, who is the unfortunate recipient of a washing machine from her devoted family.

The Strange Story of Pippin Wood is also an adventure story but with a specialised appeal for any young person who has fallen under the spell of that enchanting miniature of the theatre, the Puppet Show. Jeremy's ambition is to be a puppeteer like his dead father, and in his travels in search of the great Puppet Master, Pinelli, he is lucky enough, not only to find him, but a derelict theatre in Pippin Wood. He makes friends with other children and they decide to give a show of their own—even making their own puppets from such strange materials as frayed rope, sponge rubber, upholstery fringe, dish mops and steel wool. The abandoned theatre comes to life and the mystery of its long sleep is solved. Written well and informatively this will appeal, not only as a story but as an illuminating account of the special problems of the little theatre of the marionettes.

Whizz for Atoms is written in the type of humour one either likes or loathes. The mis-spellings are painstaking and continuous but not authentic. It makes fun of schoolboys, not for them. I can only conclude that the other "Molesworth masterpieces" have sold their 2,000,000 copies to adolescent fathers given to surreptitious sniggering and a nostalgia for out-dated "Wheezes", "chizzes" and "wizard rags".

E. M. C.

L'AGE NOUVEAU. Numéro 98. Octobre 1956. 180 frs.

L'Age Nouveau is a journal of wide interest. The present number opens with an admirable survey of current problems, and in particular the Suez Canal and Algeria. Its plea for a united Europe merits serious attention.

"Les nations européennes, occupées à leurs querelles de clocher, repliées sur elles-mêmes et conduites par des politiciens à courte vue, ont préféré ne pas s'apercevoir que le monde serait dominé de plus en plus par la politique des *blocs*. Le bloc américain n'a effrayé personne: il représentait la démocratie triomphante, le bloc eurasiatique avec ses satellites a été salué avec enthousiasme par tous ceux qui font d'un communisme, qui n'exista jamais que dans l'imagination de Karl Marx, la condition même du progrès humaine. Entre ces deux blocs, l'Europe risquait l'asphyxie."

Considerable space has also been given to a most fascinating enquiry conducted by M. Henri Corbière. The eminent men who have here answered his questions concerning 'Pouvoirs et Possibilités de L'Intelligence Humaine' include MM. Louis Armand, Jean Rostand, René Souèges, Lord Russell and Dr. Carl G. Jung.

THE LOYAL AND THE DISLOYAL. By Morton Grodzins. The Cambridge University Press for the Chicago University Press. 25s.

IN SILENCE I SPEAK: Cardinal Mindszenty and Hungary's 'New Order'. By George N. Shuster. Gollancz. 21s.

The matter of Mr. Grodzins's book is, in a sense, nebulous and intractable for if one uses the word 'attachment' instead of the emotive 'loyalty', then it is seen that every human being clings obviously or unconsciously, inarticulately or reasonably throughout his life to what asserts his existence as an individual and as a member of a community, and that each case-history offers a different and precarious web.

Mr. Grodzins is concerned with the major patterns: patriotism and loyalty to democratic or totalitarian systems; but he stresses also that family, school, church, livelihood, social class and activities "all take important roles—sometimes parallel, sometimes conflicting—in shaping an individual's career, attitudes, and personality." The main theme ("patriotism—and treason—must be analyzed as the products of social situations and of human reactions to those situations") shows that in the modern world loyalties have become fluid, numerous, opposed, variously rooted, defined and judged. The democratic nations offer the least tension between allegiances for most of these can be comfortably and respectably accommodated, whereas totalitarian states, believing that obedience is to be equated with loyalty, aim at "the destruction of all human activity not controlled by the state and the construction of a new life in the state service under state direction."

Yet in every form of society there are the non-conformists, the misfits, the hostile; and in his consideration, effectively illustrated, of 'a pathology of disloyalty', Mr. Grodzins uses the term 'traitriot' to remind us that "all patriots are potential traitors". As a social scientist, he has written an objective and valuable study of the complex impulses behind patterns of behaviour and belief; as a democrat, he makes an undogmatic but eloquent plea for the practice of democratic virtues.

The recent tragic history of Hungary, and especially the conflict between Church and State, is recounted by Dr. Shuster as fully and accurately as the records and his contacts with eminent Hungarians allow. Cardinal Mindszenty and Rákosi with their inexorably opposed loyalties, receive the most detailed attention in these grim pages; and of the former Dr. Shuster writes in the most ardent

terms. Revered as saint and patriot, he continues, according to the latest information, and despite every threat and appeal, steadfastly to refuse any compromise where the supreme authority of Rome, his duties as the spiritual guide of his people, and the dissolution of the Peace Priests organization, are concerned.

The many others who have had their part, sorry or courageous, in the reign of terror, the ever worsening economic and educational conditions, the activities of the Peace Priests, the plight of the religious communities, the struggle for power within the Communist ranks, are also vividly described; but Dr. Shuster insists that his story "is worth telling chiefly because there is made manifest in it a dedication to holiness, of oneself and of society, which would not be thwarted though all might in an earthly sense was mustered against it."

His argument that "Communism cannot be defeated until it has been overcome as an intellectual movement" merits the attention of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy in other countries, and not least in Eire, for the intellectual food offered to the faithful is still scant and questionably treated.

VIA MEDIA. An Essay in Theological Synthesis. By E. L. Mascall. Longmans. 12s. 6d.

Dr. Mascall's latest book is a demonstration that the Church of England has chosen to tread a *via media* and that for her Christian orthodoxy "in some strange way at one and the same time holds a middle position between the various heresies and also includes whatever positive truths those heresies contain."

The doctrines of Creation, the Trinity, the Incarnation and Grace, so jealously guarded by the Church Fathers—and how many of the devout have in the process littered the ground!—are evidently as vulnerable as ever for the theologians continue to strengthen their defences, to test the fabric of medieval scholasticism for any sign of crumbling, to draw up their favourite lists of threatening heresies. Dr. Mascall, learned and zealous, makes of his inspection a brilliant exercise to be admired, and doubtless criticized, by those similarly engaged; and in so far as such labours are necessary his book is unreservedly to be commended as the careful survey of a path open more on the Thomist than the Protestant side.

The mystic will probably remain content with his own affirmation that whereas he was blind, now he sees; but the ordinary Christian facing the suffering of enslaved and underprivileged peoples, and the blatant and insidious enemies of the spiritual life, is in a different position. Reading, for example, such passages as:

"We might be tempted to think that the doctrine of the *tropoi hyparxeōs*, with its insistence upon the objective threefoldness of presentation, might somewhat minimize the unity of the Godhead . . . The opposite is the case. For the particularities of ingeneration, generation and promission are not merely distinguishing features of the three Persons; they are their only distinguishing features."

"The human nature of Christ is neither unattached to a *hypostasis* nor does it inhere in a human *hypostasis*; it inheres in the divine *hypostasis* of the Second Person of the Trinity. It is neither itself a *hypostasis* nor is it *anhypostatic*, but it is *enhyposstatic* in the divine Word."

he may unhappily feel that this theological equipment belongs rather to the tournament than to the modern battle-field.

MY SIBERIAN LIFE. By M. A. Novomeysky. Max Parrish. 25s.

Mr. Novomeysky, the founder of the Palestine Potash Company, has written an absorbing account of his early life in Siberia. The grandson of political exiles, he was born in Barguzin, on the shores of Lake Baikal. The Tsarist Government had sent there many of the most important political offenders, and the small, picturesque town was much influenced by these stimulating exiles. Mr. Novomeysky himself was to help form the Revolutionary Committee of 1917; but it would seem that the progressive and independent attitude of the district was not to the taste of the Soviet Government for by 1927 Barguzin had become a mere village, and its leaders were shot or imprisoned.

After completing his education as a mining engineer in Germany, the young Novomeysky devoted himself equally to developing the resources of his own region and to socialist activities. In 1905 he was imprisoned for some months in the notorious Peter and Paul Fortress of Petersburg, and, on his release, travelled to Berlin on a false passport. Though he did not join the Party, he turned hopefully to a study of Marxism and after his return became increasingly involved in the events that have enabled him to write in detail of the Revolution, the civil war in Siberia, and Kolchak's dictatorship. With notable clarity he recounts the history of the period in Russia; portrays vividly Prince Kropotkin, Rasputin, Lenin, Trotsky, Kerensky, and others; and describes his bitter disillusionment when the Bolsheviks rose to power. The democratic ideals for which he and his friends had fought were as much hated by the new rulers as by the old, and it was with great difficulty that Mr. Novomeysky escaped to Palestine.

In 1936, he received permission to visit his sister in Moscow. She was still respected there as a veteran of the Revolution, but her parting words to him are among the saddest in the book.

"I said: 'We may never see each other any more. Tell me what to wish you now we are saying good-bye.'

"My sister thought some moments, then replied: 'Wish that we may be able to live without fear.'"

ONE MAN . . . MANY PARTS. By Lord Gorell. Odhams. 25s.

One may have travelled too many roads, as Lord Gorell says he has done, ever to get anywhere; but the longer and wider the roads are, the more frequent are the opportunities of meeting interesting people and, if memory is retentive, of storing reminiscences. During six reigns the author has seen the complete transformation of British life and manners and customs. His activities and interests have been many and varied, and here he writes, "at random", as one who has "filled each unforgiving minute" in prose and poetry, law and accountancy, journalism and publishing, and on active service in two wars. Chairmanship of the Council of the Society of Authors and a partnership in the House of John Murray brought him into close association with most of the distinguished of contemporary literary figures: and he has something revealing to say about, amongst others, Barrie, Binyon, Wells, Shaw and Yeats. There are, too, innumerable anecdotes and shrewd conclusions about his travels in America and his experiences at the War Office. In Ireland he was arrested on the suspicion of being a spy.

TESTIMONY TO HILAIRE BELLOC. By Eleanor and Reginald Jebb. Methuen. 16s.

Eleanor Jebb's contribution to this Testimony is reminiscent of the family and social life of her father. In 190 pages (a rare example of clarity and compression) the subject's son-in-law shows us the controversialist who challenged the doctrines of Darwin, the teachings of Gibbon, flouted the ideas of Shaw and Wells, and resigned from Parliament so that he could openly attack the leaders of his Party. Belloc was the child of a mixed Anglo-French stock, with a touch of Irish; so, when we consider the influences which guided him in early life, we may readily accept the judgment that he became an ardent European, whose vision was too wide to be restrained by nationality. He was born in Paris and served the required time in the French army. When the family settled in England it was intended that he should become a farmer, but he chose a scholarly avocation. After a passable career at Oxford and the publication of his earlier historical works, he entered wholeheartedly into the whirl and turmoil of literary and verbal controversy, became a fervent champion of his Faith and a courageous social reformer.

BAILY'S HUNTING DIRECTORY, 1956-1957, with Three Hunt Maps. London: Vinton & Company, Limited. 35s. net.

We delight in reviewing this encyclopedia of hunting each year. "Baily's" never stands still and each edition is an improvement on the previous one. As usual, details are given of all types of packs. Even America is included and we find particulars of 90 foxhounds and 21 beagles. This year there is a section devoted to 202 Point-to-Point meetings and it will be exciting for the hunting man to read descriptions of many famous runs. In such an outstanding publication we feel diffident about making any carping criticisms. Might we suggest that it will be found possible to give information about Irish Point-to-Point meetings in the next edition. The South County Dublin drag hounds might also be included.

We congratulate the publishers without reservation on a volume which will always be a joyful bedside companion for the people of the hunting world.

B. S.

A FUGUE OF CINDERELLAS. By Bryan Guinness. Heinemann. 10s. 6d.

Those who are aware of the economic "life" of the community and the "myths of Moses or of Marx" will be greatly refreshed by a trip to Venice in company with Bryan Guinness. Here may be discovered, beside a bridge of tender sighs, "as dreamy a leash of lovers as ever made a dreamland of hard earth"—to use Meredith's phrase. Here rewards and punishments are nearer the heart's desire. Jack hath Jill. Fastidious Cinderellas keep alive their vision of a Prince Charming even when a pumpkin lies upon the writing table. *Nessun maggior dolore*. . . . As the entrancing Angelica says: "In the counterpoint of living, only those who have seen sorrow can know gladness".

M. C.

NIGHTS OF GLADNESS. By W. Macqueen-Pope. Hutchinson. 21s.

With delightful enthusiasm and the memory of a righteous elephant Mr. Macqueen-Pope presents 'merry England'. There is *The Beggar's Opera*, which "made the rich gay and Gay rich". There are Gilbert and Sullivan, and

things like Ballad Opera, Opera Bouffe, Burlesque, etc., and then the essentially British 'Musical Comedy'. "Those were the days",—before machines, economics and full-time employment reigned, with their dull, petty hates.

Musical Comedy owed much to Paris and Vienna. The violins spoke of tenderness and love, where, later, the saxophones were to wail of inhibitions and sex. George Edwardes, at the Gaiety, Daly's and elsewhere, glorified womanhood, and the men (and the women) seemed to like it.

Now, in our days of the lost West End, we may see in Mr. Macqueen-Pope's records a social document, which, if properly apprehended, might save Europe from the power-lust of International Money. George Edwardes, and his like, *put back* into theatrical art whatever they gained—and more. With Charles Frohman (from America) there was "no need for a written contract", says our author. These people wished to live not merely to 'make money'.

Modern youth should see in a book like this not a mere nostalgic sigh but a clarion call, to battle for things worth fighting for.

M. C.

DELINQUENT CHILDREN.

MURDER STORY. A Play in Three Acts with an Epilogue on Legal Killing. by Ludovic Kennedy. London: Gollancz. 13/6 net.

DELINQUENT BOYS. The Culture of the Gang. By Albert K. Cohen. Routledge and Kegan Paul, Ltd. 21/- net.

1,000,000 DELINQUENTS. By Benjamin Fine. London: Gollancz. 18/- net.

JUVENILE OFFENDERS BEFORE THE COURTS. By Max Grünhut. Oxford: Clarendon Press. London: Cumberlege. 21/- net.

BORSTAL AND BETTER. A Life Story. By Richard P. Maxwell. London: Hollis and Carter. 16/- net.

CELL 2455; DEATH ROW. By Caryl Chessman. London: Longmans, Green & Co. 16/- net.

There is an absolute spate of books about delinquency; we have reviewed several lately and now we have six more on our list. It is a terrible disease and requires immediate treatment; this should be prophylactic and curative. Having read many authorities on the subject, we are convinced that the most important factor in prevention is improvement in home conditions; this can be obtained by the education of parents which might be carried out by parents' guidance councils and possibly by clergymen. The number of mothers who go out to work must also lessen home influence. Curative treatment may be divided into psychiatric and imprisonment of some kind. Trained psychiatrists attached to court houses should be able to decide in a given case on the correct procedure. "Murder Story" differs from the other books in many ways; it is a propaganda play and the inclusion of propaganda in drama usually detracts from its artistic merit, for it may incline us to forget that "the play is the thing". This story is obviously based on the hanging of the youth Bentley in London, for it has the same plot—a youth engaged in a robbery during which a policeman was killed; he takes no

part in the killing, but in spite of this he is hanged ; he was under 20, but still old enough for legal murder. The Bentley episode is a strong case for the abolitionists and it is a meritable one. There is a goodly amount of sentimental dialogue and some "sob stuff," chiefly exemplified by the conversion of the "hero" to Religion, and an anxiety to improve his intellect when he is fairly confident about his voyage to the next world. The epilogue advances many arguments against legal murder. During the last 100 years, thirty countries or states have done away with hanging ; in only one did the murder rate increase ; in others it diminished. This play might be a suitable vehicle for an amateur dramatic society.

The second on our list is an essay on delinquent subculture, and the central idea is that the spread of juvenile delinquency can only be stemmed if one first understands it as a persistent subculture that is traditional in certain neighbourhoods of our cities. The International Library of Sociology and Science Reconstruction is the body responsible for the production of this work. It is a scientific treatise written in specialised language, and is more for the research scholar than for the reader who may think he has bought a thriller. It is suggested that the process of becoming a delinquent is the same as becoming *e.g.* a boy scout ; to us this seems rather far fetched. Stolen sweets are sometimes the most tasty, but much of youthful philosophy seems to lie in the adventure "for the hell of it." Apparently the majority of cases of youthful delinquency are concentrated on the male working class so cure should be directed to this part of the population. "Ambition is a virtue ; its absence is a defect and a sign of maladjustment". But the ambition must be of the right kind—not ambition to excel in crime, *e.g.*, to become leader of a gang of murderers or thieves. There are five chapters and the title of the last is "A delinquent solution". We agree with the author who states that this section of the book is frankly a speculation toying with possibilities. We would like to have read about some concrete and definite ideas for solution. Talbot Parsons argues that the mother is the most vital agent for socialisation, and that the modern urban family is too small ; the influence of the father is at least as important. We feel that Dr. Cohen has been too vague, but in his final lines he hopes that the book will have stimulated thinking and research along new lines. Numerous references and an efficient index complete an important work which will be found useful by the serious student of child welfare.

In contradistinction to "Delinquent Boys," "1,000,000 Delinquents" is a simple story for the general public. What are the predominant reasons for this enormous increase in child delinquency? Apart from family reasons which we have mentioned, horror comics, the cinema and to a small extent television shine as blameworthy factors. The publication of horror comics should cease. Children should not be permitted to enter cinemas under the age of sixteen, and television programmes should be carefully chosen by parents. Unlike Cohen, Fine not only describes many cases, but makes various suggestions. The rise in crime in 1953 was 1.9% for adults and 7.9% for children ; one in three were not yet 16. 17% of drug addicts were less than 21. 15% of all cases of rape and assault were committed by youths under 18 and 15% of homicides under 21. This is surely a dreadful list and is a severe condemnation of any country. In 1953 the United States Attorney-General stated that 1,000,000 boys and girls would get into serious trouble with the police during the year, and this remark precipi-

tated the author into the present study. The dreadful condition of the slum houses encourages children to leave home and they often become members of a gang, and these gangs are a menace and should be broken up. It is sad to read that whipping is still a routine in some training schools because "this is the only kind of treatment they understand". Other disciplinary and saner methods where corporal punishment is not practised are described and the section "What are the things delinquents like and don't like" is instructive. What of the future? The following are discussed:—The Home, The School, The Church, The Community, Moral Standards, Police Departments, Psychiatric Clinics, Juvenile Courts, Foster Homes and Detention Places, Training Schools. Many examples of criminality are given. An index which is absent would be an improvement. Dr. Fine has done a valuable service for the children of the world in "1,000,000 Delinquents," and it should help in ending this ever increasing scourge.

Max Grünhut is Reader in Criminology in the University of Oxford and this study of his could be submitted as a thesis for a degree in Criminology if such a thing existed. It is based on an experience of 134 police districts in England and Wales, and consists largely of a statistical study of youthful delinquency from every angle. The author had plenty of material, for in 1938, over 61,000 juveniles appeared before magistrates in these countries. Large industrial places have a higher rate of delinquency than that found in rural areas and the prevalence of crime is six or eight times greater in boys than in girls. The treatment practice of the courts in different parts of the country is given, *e.g.*, police cautioning, fining, probation as well as the practice in relation to specific forms of delinquency are dealt with from every angle. The valuable information in this work is obviously the result of serious and prolonged research.

The majority of people are born straight and do not lie; on the contrary we are acquainted with others who seem to delight in crooked ways and telling lies which are usually unnecessary. In "Borstal and Better" Maxwell relates in excellent prose the story of his life. He was one of eleven children, five of whom died prematurely. Whether the family was so large and he lacked proper training or whether he was a natural criminal, it is difficult to say. His adventures started at two years of age when he ran away from his mother but was soon caught. After that he was in Borstal and various gaols on and off until he was thirty-three. There is a curious underlying feeling all through the book that at heart he was a really decent man and that an inborn love of adventure rather than a love of crime drove him away from paying jobs back to prison. Borstal is described as a comfortable and happy club where he was extremely popular singing at concerts and initiating and editing a magazine. He was a favourite with women, and at the age of thirty-three he married happily, and now holds a position of trust in a large public company.

Maxwell could vie with professional writers and his life of adventure, though not to be recommended for others to follow, could prove a success in the film world.

A wonderful tale of a complete cure of delinquency.

Cell 2455 is sixth on the list.

What an appalling waste! Here is the story of a man with a split personality. All through the pages of this book which is written with emotion, and in excellent English, there emanates fine feelings combined with the most deep-

seated criminal tendencies. It has often been demonstrated that youthful delinquency is nearly always due to some familiar abnormality, *e.g.*, a bad home, ignorance in upbringing, domestic quarrels, etc. There is nothing of the kind in this case. The parents were happily married with only this one son who nearly died at birth and lived through an early childhood beset with serious illnesses. What was the cause of his complete lack of social conscience? Why did he hate Society? He had everything to live for. He was emotionally distressed from the moment he discovered that his mother was illegitimate, and he had no hesitation in committing crimes to procure funds necessary to pay detectives in order to try and discover her antecedents. When she whom he loved dearly became a bed-ridden paralytic after a motor accident, his crimes became more numerous and daring. He was loyal to his fellow-criminals, but punished disloyalty. He liked and was popular with women. His romantic marriage with Judy makes a story in itself. Cell 2455 is the cell reserved for those condemned to death and Chessman had spent six years in it at the time he finished this absorbing tale which tells how he delayed his execution year after year, defending himself through the knowledge of law which he acquired during his incarceration. We feel that this cat and mouse treatment of a prisoner which could not happen in Great Britain or Ireland, is a forceful argument for the abolitionists. The author after a sickening sequence of crimes which brought him into reformatories and jails from his boyhood was sentenced to the electric chair for kidnapping three adult girls; there was no killing, but death is the punishment for this crime in the States. No punishment can be too severe for the kidnapper of children, many of whom die or are killed, but some of the girls mentioned were asking for trouble.

Anyone who wants a life and death story which rings fascinatingly and horribly true, will enjoy this book, but the reader must not be squeamish; it should certainly not get into the hands of children.

The history of this young man who became a menace to society at a very early age provides a strong diatribe against the methods adopted for treating delinquency in the United States of America.

It is now eight years since Chessman was condemned, and he is still in the cell, fighting for his life.

We may be criticised for devoting perhaps too much space in this Magazine to the subject of delinquent children. We make no excuse; governments and the public must be thoroughly awakened to the presence of this vampire in our midst which is destroying the most important asset of our population—our children who will be the future parents. Except for Grünhut's book which only deals with England and Wales, we have seen no statistical records about delinquency in relation to countries or races, but we believe if such an enquiry were undertaken, our own country and the Jewish race would be found to have fewer delinquents than other countries and races, and we attribute this to better family life. Education of parents which should improve family relationship would seem to be the most valuable avenue to explore.

B. S.

ONE DOCTOR IN HIS TIME. By Bethel Solomons. Christopher Johnson. 18s.

Any man who sits down to write his autobiography is faced with the immediate question "How much shall I tell?" He may, like Rousseau, firmly resolve

to tell everything, and cause a sensation by his efforts to live up to that resolution. In our own time George Moore took as his motto "to be ashamed of nothing but to be ashamed", and Isadora Duncan achieved a degree of autobiographical candour which even Moore may have found disconcerting. These exhibitionists, without a doubt, give us the best value for our money. But not every man is willing to dissect himself, and there are readers as well as writers who prefer a more objective method. Many a man is content to set down the facts of his life, add certain reflections and leave it at that. We must do the analysis, we must read between the lines, we must draw our own conclusions. Such books make no attempt to establish an atmosphere, but they often give a vivid picture of the living scene. Only a fanatical subjectivist will despise them for not being something which they had no wish to be.

One Doctor in his Time is such a book. It is written straightforwardly and with restraint. In one of the later chapters a *soi-disant* Dr. Paddy O'Sullivan lays bare some of the secrets of his case-book and immediately strikes a note of greater intimacy, which has much to recommend it. But for the most part discretion prevails; although there are plenty of amusing anecdotes to lighten the narrative. The book begins with the forthright statement, "I was born an Irish Jew in the year 1885", and throughout—in spite of the wide range covered, and the multitude of personalities mentioned—two themes prevail, Judaism and Dublin. It begins with the concord of a Jewish family, living in Waterloo Road beside Professor Tyrell. Horse trams pass the door. The long car, "driven by a dear old man called Fitzpatrick" transports the children out to Howth. In winter there are the Leggett Byrne dancing classes (memorable also to Elizabeth Bowen), and that great occasion when the future Master of the Rotunda was chosen to dance a solo hornpipe before the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland at a charity bazaar. His education had already begun for at seven we find him at the educational establishment of a certain Dr. Barnard in Leeson Street. There were then one hundred pupils.

"I went to the kindergarten department under Miss Cahill. She was a little squat woman, but we all thought her beautiful. We worked like anything to get to the head of the class. The incentive was there, for the head child was allowed to kiss Miss Cahill at the beginning and end of the day."

There is a sly irony in that phrase 'the incentive was there' which Anatole France would have approved. As against this roseate diurnal prospect it should be noted that "Dr. Barnard was a mighty caner". His decision to read medicine while still conducting his academy was a fatal one, discipline suffered, bullying was rampant, and at last there were only three pupils left in the school, of whom the young Bethel was one. We are not told whether the fascinating Miss Cahill was still a member of the depleted staff, but this may have had something to say to his adherence. Nevertheless it amazes him now that his wise father should have left him so long.

We move on to St. Andrew's School, to Dublin University, to Rugby football and no less than ten international caps, to the life of a medical student in Dublin and to a brief spell in Paris.

"I went to the picture galleries, lived some of the life of the Latin Quarter, did the things most young men of the time did in Paris and was entertained by my Aunt Emily."

This is too discreet altogether. One feels inclined to comment "Confound your Aunt Emily. Tell us a little about Mimi, if she existed."

Perhaps she never existed; or perhaps she is forgotten? But a moment later we get a glimpse at least of one of Mimi's contemporaries.

"I declined to play Rugby for the Stade Française; I knew if I accepted this invitation I would neglect my work. I had a happy time with this club, however, for they made me an honorary member. The women were most enthusiastic about Rugby. One day I was sitting in the enclosure with the *bonne amie* of one of the players. At half-time he came along with a black eye and said he was hurt and would play no more. The girl answered: "If you play no more, I'll not play with you any more," and so he returned to the game.

Nothing in the autobiography is amplified more than this. The style throughout is clipped, brief and anecdotal. Nevertheless the most casual asides are often illuminating. Of that great obsession of the modern mind, sex, the author writes,

"Those were Victorian days. I can truthfully say I never heard the word sex until I was sixteen or seventeen years old. We never thought about it. As a schoolboy I had numerous innocent affairs with girls of my own age. I loved to kiss them and to flirt but although I was extremely normal, the idea of anything else never entered my head. My dear mother undoubtedly thought it was unnecessary to teach sex, and probably it was unnecessary then. I wonder if we knew too little, or if the children of to-day know too much?"

If half the reports that reach this country about American youth are true it would seem that there at any rate, the young are endangered not by knowing too little on the subject but by having heard too much.

Only a few aspects of the book have been dealt with here. It contains plenty of wit and of sardonic humour. Its author reveals a very real gift for good-fellowship. He is a devoted family man. He has remained faithful to his race and his religion, although he prefers Liberal to Orthodox Judaism. He is never sententious, he never preaches, there is even a touch of the Abbé Coignard about his tolerance for the failings of others; but no one could ever question his sincerity, his courage or his kindness, and if he gives us little or no introspection in these pages it is perhaps for the very simple reason that he is, by nature, a happy extrovert.

TRACE. Villiers Publications. Nos. 17 and 18, 1s. 6d. each. No. 19, 2s.

Trace, as a Directory of the little magazines and in its discussion of literary matters, is chiefly addressed to the young writer. In addition, Number 19 includes most helpful notes on the smaller presses and the material favoured by them.

BOOKS ABROAD. An International Literary Quarterly. Summer 1956. University of Oklahoma Press. One Dollar and Twenty-five Cents.

The Summer number of *Books Abroad* provides a comprehensive and valuable survey of Haitian, Carribean, French West Indian and African Negro literature. In addition there are the usual excellent reviews of foreign books and journals.

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